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The fragments of late antique "patria"

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university of
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THE FRAGMENTS OF LATE ANTIQUE *PATRIA*

PhD thesis

to obtain the degree of PhD of the
University of Groningen
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and in accordance with
the decision by the College of Deans.

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on the authority of the
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of Arts and Philosophy.

Double PhD degree

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Thursday 17 May 2018 at 14.30 hours.

by

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*A mí se me hace cuento que empezó Buenos Aires:
La juzgo tan eterna como el agua y el aire.*

(J.L. Borges, *Fundación mítica de Buenos Aires*, vv. 33–34)

To my family.

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PROLEGOMENA

Introduction

Frequently cited as the sources of various literary works, late antique *patria* have rarely been studied in depth.¹ The reason for that is simple: almost nothing has survived. As Dagron highlighted at the beginning of his famous *Constantinople Imaginaire*, “tout ou presque est perdu, et il n’est pas sûr que sous le titre de *Patria* nous n’ayons pas souvent affaire à de simples éloges, à des *ekphraseis* ou à des épopées en vers” (1985, 11). The present work deals with this evanescent production. It is the first attempt to collect in a single corpus all testimonies and fragments of late antique *patria*, from the second half of the third century AD to the first half of the sixth. It offers a critical edition, along with a translation, a commentary and an introduction to the authors. It argues that these works are part of a coherent tradition.

This general introduction is divided in five sections. The first part deals with the substantive *πάτριά*: it analyzes the occurrences of the word *πάτριά* in classical and post-classical literature, reconstructing its meanings and uses. This examination is needed to determine why this noun has been chosen to indicate a certain type of literary works (§ 1). The second section introduces these texts, trying to reconstruct their structure and contents (§ 2). The third highlights the connections between them and the late antique Roman world, pointing out the social role they had in the Greek communities of the eastern Empire (§ 3). The fourth discusses the hypothetical evolution of late antique *patria* in the Byzantine world: in particular, it focuses on Hesychius the Illustrious’ *Patria of Constantinople*, transmitted by the tenth-century codex *Palatinus* 398 and particularly successful in the Byzantine empire (§ 4). The fifth and final part presents a short introduction to the critical edition (§ 5).

¹ Cf. Gigli Piccardi (1990, 14–29), Livrea (1999), and Cameron (2016, 19–22; 165–166. In order to differentiate Dame Averil Cameron from Alan Cameron, I shall refer to the former as Av. Cameron). Dagron’s focus was on the Byzantine patriographical texts, a different kind of literature, as I shall argue later (cf. § 4).

1. “The customs, the laws, the rites, and the celebrations”

As the suffix form reveals, the adjective πάτριος (= lat. *patrius*) constitutes an adjectival derivative of the substantive πατήρ (“father”).² In his *Dictionnaire étymologique*, Chantraine translated it as “qui vient du père, des ancêtres, héréditaire”, and specified that it is “dit souvent des dieux, des ancêtres, des usages, des traditions”.³ All these meanings are summarized by the substantivized adjective πάτρια. Quoting the fifth-century orator Antiphon, the patriarch Photius explains it as follows (*Lex.* π 494, 3–4):

πάτρια δὲ τὰ ἔθνη καὶ τὰ νόμιμα καὶ τὰ μυστήρια καὶ τὰς ἐορτάς.

Patria: the customs, the laws, the rites, and the celebrations.⁴

The same explanation is reported by the *Suda*, which attributes it to unspecified ῥήτορες.⁵ The elements listed by the definition can be analyzed from two complementary points of view. On the one hand, they should be read as factors of discrimination: whatever is inherited from the past and distinguishes a social group from others falls under the category of πάτρια. On the other hand, one should see them as factors of cohesion: in other words, as elements defining the identity of a collectivity, thereby supplying a standard paradigm to all its members. In this sense, the word has been frequently used in expressions such as κατὰ τὰ πάτρια (“according to the ancient custom”)⁶ and παρὰ τὰ πάτρια (“against the ancient custom”) to indicate any element going

² For further information about the derivatives in *-io-*, cf. Chantraine 1979, 33–53.

³ Chantraine 1974, 864.

⁴ Unless otherwise specified, translations of the ancient sources are mine. The critical text is normally taken from the reference edition of each author (*teste TLG*): where this is not the case, the name(s) of the different editor(s) is/are provided.

⁵ Cf. *Sud.* π 803. The encyclopedia quotes Antiphon immediately after, attributing the following sentence to him: τοῦτο δὲ τοὺς νόμους εἰδὼς πατρίους καὶ παλαιούς ὄντας ὑμῖν, «on the other hand, having known the traditional and ancient costumes you follow» (= F 78 Thalheim).

⁶ See, for instance, Thuc. IV 118; V 18; Ath. *Deipn.* VI 27; 107; etc.

along or against this paradigm.⁷ In interpreting the occurrences of the substantive πάτρια, both aspects must be taken into account: associating people on the basis of something necessarily implies their separation from those who do not share it.

Many social groups in antiquity could refer to a corpus of πάτρια: the citizens of a πόλις, for instance; but also the members of a family, the worshipers of a religious cult, or the followers of a philosophical school. The sources provide interesting examples of this variety. While introducing the *Parthica* of Arrian, Photius' *Bibliotheca* briefly summarizes the activity of the historian (*Bibl. cod.* 58 17a, 24–27):

οὗτος δὲ συντάττει πάντων ἄμεινον καὶ τὰ κατὰ Ἀλέξανδρον τὸν Μακεδόνα, ἔτι δὲ καὶ ἄλλην πραγματείαν, τὰ πάτρια τῆς Βιθυνίας, ἐξ ἧς καὶ αὐτὸς ἔφυ, ἐπιγράψας τὸ βιβλίον Βιθυνιακά.

He narrates the deeds of Alexander of Macedonia better than all the others; he focuses also on other material, writing the book *Bithyniaca* over the antiquities of his homeland Bithynia.

The patriarch presents the content of Arrian's *Bithyniaca* as τὰ πάτρια τῆς Βιθυνίας ("the antiquities of Bithynia"). Such a reference should not come as a surprise: as Gabba noted, ancient local histories' aim was "to note and record the peculiarities and characteristic features of particular places and individuals" (1981, 60). Photius returns to the *Bithyniaca* in another codex of the *Bibliotheca*. He introduces it as follows (*Bibl. cod.* 93, 73a, 32–35):

ἀνεγνώσθη τοῦ αὐτοῦ τὰ Βιθυνιακά ἐν βιβλίοις ὀκτώ, ἐν οἷς τὰ τε μυθικά τὰ περὶ Βιθυνίας καὶ τᾶλλα ὅσα συνέστη περὶ αὐτὴν εἰς λεπτὸν ἀναγράφει, τῇ πατρίδι δῶρον ἀναφέρων τὰ πάτρια.

I read the same author's *Bithyniaca* in eight books: they record in a fine way the myths of Bithynia and the other things related to it. He offered this record of antiquities as a gift to his homeland.

⁷ E.g. Dem. *Neaer.* 116; Aris. *Pol.* 1268b; etc.

Two aspects of this text should be taken into account. First, it reveals the celebratory goal of Arrian's work: as Photius notes, he has written the *Bithyniaca* as a δῶρον to his native land. Such a dedication must have been part of the introduction of the book. Exposing the history of Bithynia was a way to honor the region. Second, one should focus on the meaning of the final πάτρια: as it is possible to see, it does not indicate only the traditions of Bithynia, but also their written record. Both aspects will be of great interest later (cf. § 2).⁸

As already said, corpora of πάτρια were not the sole prerogative of cities and other geographical entities. They could be shared by many other groups, such as particular families or religious societies. Examples of this are provided by Cicero and Athenaeus. At the end of a letter to Atticus, the former writes (*Ep. Att.* I 9, 2):

Thyillus te rogat et ego eius rogatu Εὐμόλπιδων πάτρια.

Thyillus asks you, and I at his request do the same, the *patria* of the Eumolpidae.

The main subject of the letter – written during the spring of 67 BC – is the delivery of some Greek statues (*signa Megarica et Hermas*,

⁸ A similar use of πάτρια is provided by the *Suda*. The encyclopedia dedicates an entry to the Phoenician author Sanchuniathon, mostly known for being one of the sources of Philo and – through him – of Eusebius of Caesarea (cf. σ 25). The entry refers to πάτρια of Tyre written τῇ Φοινίκων διαλέκτῳ, «in Phoenician». Most likely, they are one and the same with the Φοινικικὴ Ἱστορία («Phoenician History») quoted by Eusebius (*Praep. Ev.* I 9, 19–29). Either the Sudaist, or one of his sources must have altered the title of the work, naming it on the base of its contents. Once again, a source establishes a link between πάτρια and local historiography. For further information about Sanchuniathon and his *fortuna*, see Attridge–Oden 1981; Baumgarten 1981; Lipiński 1983. Another interesting attestation comes from Arethas' *Commentary to the Apocalypse* (in caput XXI 19–20, 773): ὡς τὰ πάτρια Βιθυνῶν ἀνατάξαμένοις εἴρηται («as it is said by those who ordered the antiquities of Bithynia»). In this case, rather than a local history of Bithynia, one should interpret the πάτρια Βιθυνῶν as the corpus of Bithynian traditions: it is not by chance that the commentator uses the verb ἀνατάσσω, «to order, organize». This could therefore be a collection of various antiquarian material, organized by the unspecified authors and used by Arethas.

“Megarian statues and herms”): having asked his friend to take care of it, Cicero mentions the request of Thyillus. What the epigrammatist really wants, is not immediately clear. Jacoby interpreted the passage as a reference to a book on the Εὐμολπιδῶν πάτρια and inserted it in his collection of fragmentary historians.⁹ A different interpretation was proposed by Shackleton Bailey, who translated the Greek as “the rites ancestral of Eumolpus”: according to Bailey, Thyillus was asking for information about the Eleusinian mysteries. The briefness of Cicero’s mention would have been due to the fact that Atticus was already informed of the poet’s need.¹⁰ A third reading was suggested by Jones, who identified Cicero’s πάτρια with the statues requested by the orator in the previous lines.¹¹ The mention of the Eumolpidae should then be taken as a reference to Greeks.¹²

Before discussing the three hypotheses, some remarks are necessary. The first concerns the protagonists of the letter: Cicero and Atticus do not need any introduction, but something has to be said about Thyillus. As already mentioned, he was a poet and a member of Cicero’s circle. Of his production, only three epigrams survive: one of them is about the cult of Cybele.¹³ Such a topic confirms Thyillus’ interest in the Eumolpidae: the heirs of Eumolpus were indeed responsible for the maintenance of the Eleusinian Mysteries.¹⁴ As the sources witness, they took care of the ἐξήγησις (“interpretation”) of the cults, ensuring that the rituals were performed κατὰ τὰ πάτρια, “according to the inherited traditions”.¹⁵ The Eumolpidae were the only family who could do that: their ἄγραφοι νόμοι (“non-written laws”) were held in high regard.¹⁶ That said, one can return to Cicero’s letter. Jones’s suggestion is

⁹ Cf. *FGrHist* 355, T1.

¹⁰ Cf. Shackleton Bailey 1965, 115; 284. See also Tyrrell–Purser 1904, 136.

¹¹ Cf. *BNJ* 355, T1.

¹² Cf. *BNJ* 355, *loc. cit.*: «Statues from Megara and herms presumably from Athens, taken together, would of course be summarily termed ‘Greek’, so we would have to understand Cicero’s reference to the Eumolpidae as a kind of *synekdochē*, ‘the part for the whole’».

¹³ *AP* VI 170; VII 223; X 5. Cf. Summers 1996, 356.

¹⁴ About the figure of Eumolpus, see De Cicco 2015. About the religious role of his heirs, see Parker 1996, 293–297; Mikalson 2009, 80–85.

¹⁵ Cf. Arist. *Pol.* 39, 2. For the use of this expression, see above.

¹⁶ Cf. Lys. *Contr. And.* 10; IG I³ 78, 36–37; IG I² 3490. See Hitch 2008, 135–137.

disputable. The equation πάτρια = *signa* is not confirmed by any parallel. Even the idea that Cicero could use the Eumolpidae as a part-for-the-whole reference to Greeks is not convincing: why would the orator have chosen the Eumolpidae rather than other families? Furthermore, why did he never use the priestly dynasty anymore to refer to Greeks? That Thyillus was looking for information about the ἐξηγήσεις of the Eumolpidae is probably the best explanation. Whether this information was included in a single book (as suggested by Jacoby) or not, is not possible to determine. Both hypotheses are therefore possible.

Along with the religious doctrines of Eumolpus' heirs, the sources report another example of "private" πάτρια: as already noted, it comes from Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae*. Dealing with ritual purifications, the text says (*Deipn.* IX 78, 13–18):

παρέθετο ταῦτα καὶ Δωρόθεος, φάσκων καὶ ἐν τοῖς τῶν Εὐπατριδῶν πατρίοις τάδε γεγράφθαι περὶ τῆς τῶν ἱκετῶν καθάρσεως· “ἔπειτα ἀπονιψάμενος αὐτὸς καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι οἱ σπλαγχνεύοντες ὕδωρ λαβὼν κάθαιρε, ἀπόνιζε τὸ αἷμα τοῦ καθαιρομένου καὶ μετὰ τὸ ἀπόνιμα ἀνακινήσας εἰς ταὐτὸ ἐγχεε”.

These aspects were also explained by Dorotheus. As he said, the following things are written in the *patria* of the Eupatrides about the purification of suppliants: “then, when you and the others eating the inwards have washed yourselves, take water and purify: wash off the blood from the person who must be purified; next, shake the purifying water and pour it out in the same place”.

The mention of the Eupatrides (τῶν Εὐπατριδῶν) results from a correction of Müller: the codex *Marcianus* has the less reliable θυγατριδῶν (“of the children of a daughter”) instead. Other corrections were proposed by Adam (Θυργωνιδῶν, “of the Thyrgonidae”) and Lobeck (Φυταλιδῶν, “of the Phytalidae”), but are “hardly more

attractive than the transmitted text” (BNJ 356, F1).¹⁷ Müller’s emendation has Athenaeus’ passage refer to the Athenian Εὐπατρίδαι, literally “those with a good father”. Originally used to indicate the aristocrats, the substantive was at a later time attributed to a specific aristocratic γένος (“lineage”): this circle used to take care of the cults of the Delphic Apollo, focusing in particular on the interpretation of his oracles.¹⁸ In this light, a reference to the Eupatridae goes along with the religious contents of the quote and confirms the value of Müller’s correction. Once again, a corpus of πάτρια is attributed to a religious group focusing on the ἐξήγησις of sacred lore. The literal quote reported by Athenaeus reveals that these πάτρια had been summarized in a book: its title and author are not specified.¹⁹

The idea of a unity based on inherited πάτρια was not only an attribute of specific groups, but could also refer to the Hellenized world as a whole. As the inhabitants of the Greek ecumene knew perfectly, there was something unifying them beyond the constant squabbles. Herodotus calls it τὸ Ἑλληνικόν, “the Greek thing”, and defines it as follows (*Hist.* VIII 144, 2):

αὗτις δὲ τὸ Ἑλληνικόν, ἐὼν ὁμαιμόν τε καὶ ὁμόγλωσσον, καὶ θεῶν ἰδρύματά τε κοινὰ καὶ θυσίαι ἥθεά τε ὁμότροπα.

And next what makes the “Greek thing”, that is, the same blood and the same language, the common temples of the gods, the sacrifices, and the shared customs.

Kinship, language, religion, and customs: those not sharing them were the “others” *par excellence*, the barbarians.²⁰ Reading Herodotus’ text,

¹⁷ For a panoramic over the possible emendations, see *FGrHist* 356, F1.

¹⁸ For an introduction to the Eupatridae, see Gehrke 1998. See also Valdés Guía 1998, 167–214.

¹⁹ As Jones rightly noted, an attribution to Dorotheus is difficult to sustain: cf. *BNJ* 356, F1. For an introduction to Dorotheus of Ascalon, see Montanari 2004.

²⁰ This brief panoramic over the opposition between Greeks and barbarians does not want to be complete. The topic is too ample to be properly developed here: I just aim to highlight those elements which are useful to my exposition. Several authors have extensively dealt with the concept of Greek ethnicity and

one notes how similar it is to what Photius' *Lexicon* says of πάτρια. The only element omitted by the latter is the consanguinity of the Greeks, an omission that can easily be explained by taking his source into account. The orator Antiphon, tragically involved in the history of Athens at the end of the fifth century BC, theorized in his works that all men are equal by nature: what separates them is not the φύσις ("the natural constitution"), but merely social conventions (= the νόμοι).²¹ In this light, the rejection of consanguinity as a discriminating factor between the Greeks and the "others" is not surprising. That the idea of a Hellenic "family" was part of the wider set of Hellenic πάτρια is not difficult to imagine: for those who did not share the views of Antiphon (the majority), the different customs, laws, rites, and celebrations were just a consequence of the different nature. As Aristotle famously writes (*Pol.* III 9, 1285a 18–23):

διὰ γὰρ τὸ δουλικώτεροι εἶναι τὰ ἥθη φύσει οἱ μὲν βάρβαροι
τῶν Ἑλλήνων.

Because the barbarians are by nature more servile in their customs than the Greeks.

If such a division between Greeks and barbarians was quite clear in the archaic and classical ages, things changed with the creation of the Hellenistic kingdoms. After Alexander's conquest, the Hellenic horizon became wider than ever before, putting the Greeks in touch with new places and peoples: Rome was among them. The cultures of these populations – technically speaking, barbarians – were influenced by Greek paideia and progressively conformed to its precepts.²² This

its cultural bases: for instance, Cartledge 2002 and Hall 2002. The interested reader shall find there much material not reported by my summary.

²¹ Cf. *P. Oxy.* 3647, 2, 10–15. See Cartledge 2002, 56–57. While describing the sophist Antiphon, Didymus of Alexandria separates him from the homonymous orator (cf. *De ideis* 2,7, p. 399, 18 Raabe): in spite of that, it is now widely believed that the two were the same person. See, in this respect, Bignone 1974 and Wiesner 1994–1995. For a general introduction to Antiphon, see Heitsch 1984.

²² Cf. Hall 2002, 220–226. Two examples can be used to confirm the process: in the first century BC, Diodorus noted that the indigenous populations of Sicily

process undermined the traditional definitions of “Greek” and “not Greek”, leading to a more elastic concept of Ἑλληνικόν. In order to include the “Hellenized barbarians” in the Greek world, genealogies and myths were taken and reinvented: poets, historians, philologists, grammarians, and rhetoricians built up connections between Greek communities and foreign realities.²³ In doing so, they took to the extreme a tendency already present in the previous centuries. Before being exploited to assimilate the “external” world, myth had already been used to integrate the “internal” one: links of συγγένεια (“kinship”) between different Greek cities were continuously built and dismantled following the various political developments. I shall return to this aspect later (cf. § 3).

All the examples given so far show how the word πάτρια could be used to indicate the contents of different kinds of works (local histories, exegetic texts). It must be said, though, that the noun could also be adopted as an actual title. The first example of this use is provided by Theagenes’ *Antiquities of Macedonia* (Μακεδονικὰ πάτρια). The work is mentioned by Photius as a source of Sopater’s *Various Extracts* (Ἐκλογαὶ διάφοροι).²⁴ As the patriarch states (*Bibl. cod.* 161, 104a, 13–18):

Ὁ δέκατος δὲ συνηθροίσθη [...] ἐκ τῶν Θεαγένους δὲ Μακεδονικῶν πατρίων.

The tenth book was assembled [...] from the *Antiquities of Macedonia* of Theagenes.

Photius’ quote is the only one reporting the complete title of Theagenes’ book: Stephanus of Byzantium – who extensively cites it in his *Ethnica* –

had started speaking Greek and practicing Greek customs (cf. V 6, 5). Moving to the east, the Gergithes of Lampsacus were officially considered part of the Hellenized world already in the second half of the third century BC: cf. Georges 1994, 16.

²³ It is not by chance that the Hellenistic age saw an increasing production of *ktiseis*, that is, of poems dealing with the origins of cities: cf. § 2.

²⁴ For a discussion of Sopater’s identity and work, see Focke 1911, 57–69; Henry 1938, 291–293; Glöckner 1927, 1002–1006; Janiszewski 2006, 83–84; Focanti 2017, 26, n. 3.

opts for the abridged form Μακεδονικά.²⁵ Dated by Jacoby to late antiquity (between the third and the fourth centuries AD), this local history should be better placed at the end of the third century BC.²⁶ Such an early date is confirmed by different factors: among them, the euhemeristic approach of Theagenes and the geographical context of his works.²⁷ As Stephanus's quotes reveal, the Μακεδονικά πάτρια were a "Lokalkronik" dealing with the local history of the Macedonian kingdom. That the author decided to title such a work this way shows the binomial πάτρια – local historiography to be already active in Hellenistic time: it is not an invention of the Byzantine sources.

Up to the first half of the third century AD, Theagenes' is the only attested work certainly including the substantive πάτρια in the title. As the following paragraph shows, the situation drastically changes in late antiquity.

2. The writing of *patria* in late antiquity

From the third century AD onwards, the attestations of works dedicated to the πάτρια of cities increase considerably. At the time of Diocletian (284–305 AD), the Egyptian poet Soterichus wrote the *Patria of Oasis* (Πάτρια Ὀάσεως).²⁸ Supposedly in the same years, the grammarian Diogenes collected the *Patria of Cyzicus* (Πάτρια Κυζίκου).²⁹ Under the reign of Constantine the Great (306–337 AD), the sophist Ulpian authored the *patria* of Emesa, Heliopolis, Panticapaeum, and "many other cities" (Πάτρια Ἑμεσηνῶν, Ἡλίουπόλεως, Βοσποριανῶν καὶ ἄλλων πλείστων).³⁰ In the fourth century AD, Hermias of Hermopolis composed the *patria* of his own city (Πάτριά [...] τῆς Ἑρμοπόλεως).³¹ Under the long reign of Theodosius II (408–450 AD), the grammarian Horapollon the Elder wrote *On the Patria of Alexandria* (Περὶ τῶν

²⁵ Cf. *FGrHist* 774, FF 1–16.

²⁶ Cf. *FGrHist* 774, T1.

²⁷ Cf. Focanti 2017.

²⁸ Cf. Steph. Byz. *Ethn.* s.v. Ὑάσις (v 7 Billerbeck). See **n. 11, T3**.

²⁹ Cf. *Sud.* δ 1146. See **n. 8, T1**.

³⁰ Cf. *Sud.* ο 911. See **n. 12, T1**.

³¹ Cf. Phot. *Bibl.* 279, 536a, 8. See **n. 9, T1**.

πατρίων Ἀλεξανδρείας).³² In the same years, the poet Claudianus (a namesake of the Latin poet) dedicated his *patria* to Tarsus, Anazarbus, Berytus, and Nicaea (Πάτρια Θαρσοῦ, Ἀναζάρβου, Βηρύτου, Νικαίας).³³ In the first half of the sixth century, Christodorus of Coptus wrote the *patria* of Constantinople, Thessalonica, Nacle, Heliopolis, Miletus, Tralles, and Aphrodisias (Πάτρια Κωνσταντινουπόλεως [...], Πάτρια Θεσσαλονίκης [...], Πάτρια Νάκλης [...], Πάτρια Μιλήτου τῆς Ἰωνίας, Πάτρια Τράλλεων, Πάτρια Ἀφροδισιάδος).³⁴ To conclude the list, one should mention also the anonymous *patria* of Byzantium used by Stephanus of Byzantium (τὰ πάτρια [...] τοῦ Βυζαντίου),³⁵ those of Alexandria quoted by John Malalas (τὰ πάτρια Ἀλεξανδρείας τῆς μεγάλης),³⁶ and Asclepius' *Patria of Anazarbus*, cited by an epigram of the *Palatine Anthology* (Ἀναζαρβοῦ πάτρια).³⁷ The sources do not provide any element to date them: yet, given the abundance of urban *patria* between the third and the sixth centuries AD, one can hypothesize a late dating for these works as well.³⁸ None of these *patria* has survived: and given their local focus, this loss is not surprising.³⁹

The quotes of Byzantine sources such as Stephanus of Byzantium and the *Suda* reveal that the titles of these compositions had a fixed structure: normally, the substantive πάτρια followed either by the name of the city (e.g. Πάτρια Κωνσταντινουπόλεως), or by that of its

³² Cf. Phot. *Bibl.* 279, *loc. cit.* See **n. 10, T2**.

³³ Cf. *Schol. AP* 1, 19. See **n. 7, T1**.

³⁴ Cf. *Sud.* χ 525. See **n. 6, T1**.

³⁵ Cf. Const. Porph. *De Them.* II 12, 30–33; Steph. Byz. *Ethn.* s.v. Βόσπορος (β 130, 10–15 Billerbeck). See **n. 2, FF 1–2**.

³⁶ Cf. *Chron.* IX 10, 36–41. See **n. 1, F1**.

³⁷ Cf. *AP* IX 195. See **n. 5, T1**.

³⁸ This list of *patria* does not comprehend Callinicus of Petra's εἰς τὰ Πάτρια Ῥώμης («To/For the antiquities of Rome»: cf. *FGrHist* 281, F1 = F1 Amato). In spite of the title reported by the manuscripts, it is highly plausible that the (excerpted) text comes from a speech of Callinicus entitled Περί τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἀνανεώσεως (*On the Revival of the Romans*): this is something different from the works of Soterichus or Asclepiades. Cf. Amato–Ventrella, 2009, p. 155, n. 502.

³⁹ One can reasonably suspect that a medieval copyist was scarcely interested in the *Patria of Berytus*: cf. Cameron 2016, 165–166.

inhabitants (e.g. Πάτρια Ἑμεσηνῶν).⁴⁰ This standard form makes it highly plausible that these were a distinct literary product, which played a specific role in late antique literature and presented well-defined features. A passage of Simplicius confirms this (*Comm. Ench.* XXXIII 120, 17–23):

Μετὰ τὰς θέας περὶ τῶν ἀκροάσεων λέγει, ὅς οἱ περὶ λόγους ἔχοντες ῥητορικοὺς τε καὶ ποιητικοὺς εἰς ἐπίδειξιν τῆς ἑαυτῶν εὐγλωττίας ποιοῦνται· ποτὲ μὲν ἐγκωμιάζοντες τινὰς τῶν ἐν δυνάμει, ποτὲ δὲ πάτρια πόλεων λέγοντες, ἢ τόπους ἐκφράζοντες, ἢ δικανικὰ μελετῶντες προβλήματα, ἢ τι τοιοῦτον.

After the spectacles, he speaks of the recitations, made by those who have a rhetorical and poetical preparation in order to show their fluency of speech. They perform them sometimes to praise someone in power, sometimes to narrate the antiquities of a city (πάτρια πόλεων); otherwise, to describe various locations, to treat juridical cases, or something like that.

In his commentary to the *Enchiridion* of Epictetus, the philosopher presents the exposition of the πάτρια πόλεων as one of the activities of rhetoricians and poets. The composition of *patria* – like the writing of an encomium, or the creation of a poetic ekphrasis – was a “format” offered by these figures to their public. Simplicius’ reference to οἱ περὶ λόγους ἔχοντες ῥητορικοὺς τε καὶ ποιητικοὺς (“those who have a rhetorical and

⁴⁰ That the form πάτρια + the name of the city(zens) was not a generic reference to the contents of these works (as is the case with Arrian’s πάτρια τῆς Βιθυνίας), but their actual title, is demonstrated by the *Suda*. The encyclopedia lists the various *patria* along with the other works of their authors. See, for instance, the entry of Christodorus (χ 525 = **n. 6, T1**): ἔγραψεν Ἰσαυρικὰ ἐν βιβλίοις ἕξ [...], Πάτρια Κωνσταντινουπόλεως ἐπικῶς βιβλία ἰβ’, Πάτρια Θεσσαλονίκης ἐπικῶς βιβλία κε’, κτλ. («He wrote *Isaurica* in six books [...]; *Patria of Constantinople*, in hexameters, twelve books; *Patria of Thessalonica*, in hexameters, twenty-five books; etc.». See also *Sud.* δ 1146 (about Diogenes’ *Patria of Cyzicus*, **n. 8, T1**) and ο 911 (about the *patria* of Ulpian, **n. 12, T2**). The same can be said for Photius, who quotes Hermias’ πάτριά [...] τῆς Ἑρμουπόλεως and Horapollon’ περὶ τῶν πατρίων Ἀλεξανδρείας (actually, the only title presenting a slightly different form).

poetical preparation”) is less generic than it might seem. As the preceding list of attestations show, late antique *patria* were written by different kinds of authors: the sources mention poets (such as Soterichus, Claudianus, and Christodorus), grammarians (Diogenes, Hermias, Horapollon) and sophists (Ulpian). The passage of Simplicius corroborates this variety.

Concerning the topics of these compositions, what we saw in the previous paragraph can provide some hints (cf. § 1). As their name reveals, these works presented the *πάτρια* of the cities (or, to use Photius’ words, “the customs, the laws, the rites, and the celebrations”). By collecting these local traditions, they retraced the cultural history of their subjects, distinguishing them from the rest of the empire. As Menander Rhetor writes (II 394, 24–25):

ἀλλ’ ἄγε διηγοῦτ’ τὰ ἐξαίρετα καὶ πάτρια, οἷα ταῖς ἄλλαις οὐ πρόσεστι πόλεσιν.

Let me now (?) describe also its special antiquities, those which do not belong to other cities.⁴¹

How this “antiquarian” reconstruction took place is revealed by the same author. Dealing with a hypothetical speech in honor of Apollo Smintheus, Menander dictates (II 443, 32–444, 26):

ζητήσεις δὲ ἐφ’ ἐκάστῳ τῶν κεφαλαίων τῶν πατρίων τινὰ καὶ τῶν μυθευομένων καὶ προσθήσεις, ἵνα μᾶλλον οἰκεῖον γένηται. μετὰ ταῦτα κεφάλαιον θήσεις τοιοῦτον περὶ τῆς πόλεως, ὅτι τοιγαροῦν Ἀλέξανδρος τὴν Εὐρώπην χειρωσάμενος καὶ διαβεβηκὼς ἐπὶ τὴν Ἀσίαν ἤδη, ἐπειδὴ προσέβαλε τῷ ἱερῷ καὶ τοῖς τόποις, σύμβολα τὸ μὲν ἐκίνησεν ἐπὶ τὴν κατασκευὴν τῆς πόλεως, τοῦ θεοῦ ταῦτα καταπέμποντος, καὶ κατασκευάζει τὴν εὐδαίμονα ταύτην πόλιν, καθιερώσας αὐτὴν Ἀπόλλωνι τῷ Σμινθίῳ, δίκαιον αὐτοῦ προφαίνοντος κρίνας αὐτοῦ δεῖν κατοικίζειν πόλιν, καὶ τὸν τόπον <τὸν> πάλαι τῷ θεῷ καθιερωμένον μὴ περιιδεῖν ἔρημον καὶ ἀοίκητον τὴν χώραν.

⁴¹ To translate the passage, I adapted the text of Russell–Wilson 1981, 127.

τοιγάρτοι καὶ ἡμεῖς πειρώμενοι ἀεὶ τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ προνοίας τε καὶ εὐμενείας οὐ ῥαθυμοῦμεν τῆς περὶ αὐτὸν εὐσεβείας, καὶ ὁ μὲν διατελεῖ καρπῶν ἀφθόνων διδοὺς φορὰν καὶ ῥυόμενος κινδύνων, ἡμεῖς δὲ ὕμνοις ἱλασκομέθα· τοιγάρτοι κρείττονα ἀγῶνα τὸν ἱερὸν τοῦτον διὰ ταῦτα τίθεμεν καὶ πανηγύρεις συγκροτοῦμεν καὶ θύομεν, χάριτας ἐκτινύντες ἀνθ' ὧν εὖ πάσχομεν. καὶ διαγράψεις τὴν πανήγυριν, ὅποια καὶ ὅπως πλήθουσα ἀνθρώπων συνιόντων, καὶ ὅτι οἱ μὲν ἐπιδείκνυνται τὰς αὐτῶν ἀρετὰς ἢ διὰ λόγων ἢ διὰ σώματος εὐεξίας, καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα, οἱ δὲ θεαταί, οἱ δὲ ἀκροαταί· καὶ διὰ βραχέων ἐργάσῃ θέσιν, ὥς Ἰσοκράτης ἐν τῷ Πανηγυρικῷ, λέγων ὅσα ἐκ τῶν πανηγύρεων καὶ τούτων τῶν συνόδων εἶωθεν <ἀγαθὰ γίγνεσθαι>.

You should look for some traditional or mythological details to support each heading, and add them, to give the material more relevance. Following this, you should insert a section on the city, on the following lines: 'And thus Alexander, after subduing Europe and crossing to Asia came to the temple and to the site – whereupon he observed (?) the signs for establishing the city, for the god revealed (?) them; and he established this blessed town, consecrating it to Apollo Sminthius, and thinking it right that, as *he* was guiding him, it was right to found *his* city, and not live desolate a site long made sacred to the god, nor the country round uninhabited. Therefore we also, who have always experienced the god's providence and kindness, are not laggard in his worship. He continues to give us abundant harvest and to rescue us from dangers, and we propitiate him with hymns (?). We therefore institute the great sacred context, and arrange festivals and sacrifices, returning thanks for the benefits we receive.' You should describe the festival – what it is like, how crowded with visitors, how some display their excellence in literature or physical prowess, and so on, while some are spectators or listeners. You should briefly elaborate the general

thesis (like Isocrates in the *Panegyricus*), explaining what <benefits> come from these festivals and assemblies.⁴²

As can be seen, the rhetorician suggests to integrate the speech with “traditional or mythological details” (τῶν πατρίων τινὰ καὶ τῶν μυθευομένων). As an example of that, he shows how to deal with the *patria* of a city. Everything starts from its foundation. Menander celebrates the founder Alexander, who has already conquered Europe and is going to subdue Asia, and his divine protector Apollo: the idea of founding a new settlement is attributed to the god. Having summarized the story, Menander notes that traces of it are still to be found in the present-day city: the festival of Apollo – still celebrated by the citizens – is the link between past and present. One could take Menander’s κεφάλαιον [...] περὶ τῆς πόλεως (“section on the city”) as miniature *patria*. In all probability, the works of Soterichus, Asclepius, and the others were not so different from this: they described the origin of their subjects, giving ample space to the deeds of the founder(s) and the protections of certain gods. Then, they connected this narration to their own days, highlighting the elements of continuity between the mythical past of the cities and their present condition: these elements could be festivals, monuments, names, and many other things. Examples of this literary construction are provided by the anonymous *patria* of Alexandria and Byzantium I mentioned above.

While dealing with the suicide of Cleopatra VII, John Malalas notes (*Chron.* IX 10, 36–41 = **n. 1, F1**):

μετὰ δὲ τὴν τελευτὴν αὐτῆς ἀπηνέχθη τὸ λείψανον αὐτῆς ἐν τῇ Ῥώμῃ συμυρνιασθέντα πρὸς θεραπείαν τῆς ἀδελφῆς τοῦ αὐτοῦ Αὐγούστου Ὁκταουϊανοῦ, καθὰ Θεόφιλος ὁ σοφὸς χρονογράφος συνεγράψατο. οἱ δὲ ἐκθέμενοι τὰ πάτρια Ἀλεξανδρείας τῆς μεγάλης τὴν Κλεοπάτραν ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ εἶπαν λειφθεῖσαν, καὶ ἄλλα δέ τινα μὴ συμφωνοῦντα τοῖς Ῥωμαίων συγγραφεῦσιν.

As the learned chronographer Theophilus wrote, after her death her remains were embalmed and sent to Rome as a favor to

⁴² Translation of Russell–Wilson 1981, 219–221.

Octavian Augustus' sister. However, those who expounded the *patria* of the great Alexandria said that Cleopatra was left in Egypt; they add other things that do not agree with the Roman historians.

According to the “learned” Theophilus, Cleopatra’s body was sent to Rome after the traditional embalming: this was supposed to be a homage to Augustus’ sister Octavia, betrayed by her husband Antony with the Egyptian queen.⁴³ The bizarre narration is supported by Malalas, who presents the alternative version of “those who expounded the *patria* of the great Alexandria” (οἱ δὲ ἐκθέμενοι τὰ πάτρια Ἀλεξανδρείας τῆς μεγάλης) as a less reliable variant. These unspecified authors (rightly) highlighted that the queen’s body was left in Egypt. Such an emphasis on Cleopatra’s burial makes it plausible that the lost *patria* referred to it, perhaps as one of the monuments of Alexandria. The sepulcher of the queen testified to the prestigious past of the city: it is not surprising that those who dealt with that past made explicit reference to it. A similar result was likely accomplished by the anonymous author(s) of the *Patria of Byzantium*. As mentioned above, these *patria* were used by Stephanus of Byzantium in his entry on Bosphorus. The reference of the ethnographer to his source(s) has not been preserved by the epitome of the *Ethnica*, but partially survives in Constantine Porphyrogenitus’ *De Thematibus*.⁴⁴ As the compilation reports (*De Them.* II 12, 30–33 = **n. 2, F1**):

Οἱ δὲ ἐγχώριοι Φωσφόριον αὐτὸ καλοῦσι παραγραμματίζοντες, ὅθεν οἱ τὰ πάτρια συγγεγραφότες τοῦ Βυζαντίου ἄλλην ἐπιτιθέασι μυθικὴν ἱστορίαν· ὅτι Φιλίππου τοῦ Μακεδόνης τὸ Βυζάντιον πολιορκουῖντος ***

But the local people change the letters, and call it *Phosphorion*: because of that, those who wrote the *Patria of Byzantium* have

⁴³ For the identification of Malalas’ σοφὸς χρονογράφος, see the commentary to **n. 1, T1**.

⁴⁴ For the analysis of the quote and its transmission, see **n. 2**.

proposed a different mythical tale, namely that Philip of Macedonia, while besieging Byzantium ***

Stephanus is introducing one of the ports of Constantinople, the so-called Bosporion: he says that the local inhabitants often change the letters of its name, calling it Φωσφόριον. The παραγραμμάτισις (“change of letters”) has been linked by “those who wrote the *Patria of Byzantium*” (οἱ τὰ πάτρια συγγεγραφότες τοῦ Βυζαντίου) to Philip’s siege of the city. Constantine’s text stops at this point of the narration, but the story of the Macedonian attack is reported by the epitome (*Ethn.* s.v. Βόσπορος, β 130, 10–15 Billerbeck = **n. 2, F2**):

οἱ δὲ ἐγχώριοι Φωσφόριον αὐτὸ καλοῦσι παραγραμματίζοντες· ἢ ὅτι Φιλίππου τοῦ Μακεδόνης διορύξαντος κατὰ τὴν πολιορκίαν εἴσοδον κρυπτήν, ὅθεν ἀφανῶς οἱ ὀρύττοντες ἡμέλλον τοῦ ὀρύγματος ἀναδῦναι, ἡ Ἑκάτη φωσφόρος οὖσα δᾶδας ἐποίησε νύκτωρ τοῖς πολίταις φανῆναι, καὶ τὴν πολιορκίαν φυγόντες Φωσφόριον τὸν τόπον ὠνόμασαν.

Bosporion is also the name of the port of Byzantium, but local people change the letters, and call it *Phosphorion*. Otherwise, <there is another explanation:> while besieging the city, Philip of Macedonia had a secret passage dug. Those who excavated it sought to emerge from there without being seen, but the enlightening Hecate made torches appear to the citizens in the night. Since they had avoided the fall of the city, they called the place *Phosphorion*.

The name *Phosphorion* is connected with Hecate, φωσφόρος οὖσα (“the enlightening”). The cults of the goddess were particularly widespread in Constantinople: this can explain her involvement in the tale (cf. § 3). The local form Φωσφόριον, with its peculiar etymology, is a “monument” of the history of Byzantium: like the Alexandrine grave of Cleopatra, it represented the past events of the city it had witnessed, and was inserted in its *patria*.

The importance of origins in late antique *patria* connects them with another kind of genre, namely the evanescent *ktiseis* (or

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foundation–stories). As their name suggests, these texts used to deal with the “foundations” (κτίσεις) of cities.⁴⁵ The first prose examples of this literature are attested in the fifth century BC, when Ion of Chios and Hellanicus of Lesbos described the origin of Athens.⁴⁶ After these early attestations, the writing of *ktiseis* enjoyed a great success in Hellenistic time, when the conquest of Alexander put the Greeks in contact with new people and settlements (cf. § 1). From the fourth century BC onwards, many authors devoted themselves to their redaction. The sources say, for instance, that Apollonius of Rhodes wrote seven poetic *ktiseis* (of Alexandria, Caunus, Cnidus, Naucratis, Rhodes, Canobus, and Lesbus).⁴⁷ Other *ktiseis* were written by Demosthenes of Bithynia.⁴⁸ Tales concerning the foundation of cities were also inserted in longer compositions, such as epic poems or historical works. The first book of Callimachus’ *Aitia* was dedicated to the topic.⁴⁹ The *Argonautica* of Apollonius too contains some sections of this kind.⁵⁰ Of this wide production, only a few fragments survive. Despite the scant material, the similarities between this Hellenistic literature and late antique *patria* are quite evident: both dealt with the origins and past histories of cities; both used local traditions and monuments to reconstruct them.⁵¹ One could hypothesize that they performed the same task: defining and giving value to the identities of the cities in changing worlds.⁵² In

⁴⁵ Cf. Gruber 1939; Schmidt 1947; Cairns 1979, 68–69.

⁴⁶ For an introduction to the local histories of Athens, see Pearson 1942; Jacoby 1949. About the *ktisis* of Ion of Chios, see Blanshard 2007; about that of Hellanicus, see Pearson 1942, 120.

⁴⁷ For an introduction to these compositions, the text of the fragments and a commentary, cf. Sistakou 2017. See also Krevans 2000 and Sistakou 2011.

⁴⁸ Cf. Steph. Byz. *Ethn.* s.v. Ολιζών (ο 43 Billerbeck). See the commentary of Barbantani in *FGrHist* 1769.

⁴⁹ Cf. F 50, 1–83 Massimilla. The poet wrote also a prose treatise on *Foundations of Islands and Cities and Names Changes* (Κτίσεις νήσων καὶ πόλεων καὶ μετονομασίαι): cf. *Sud.* κ 227.

⁵⁰ E.g. the construction of the walls of Thebes by Amphion and Zethus in I 735–741.

⁵¹ In spite of the similarities, the two productions remained separated: the quotes of later sources (such as the *Suda*) confirms that. Why refer to them in different ways, if they were the same kind of composition?

⁵² For an extensive analysis of this aspect (from the classical antiquity onwards), see Clarke 2008.

particular, the *ktiseis* responded to the broadening of the Hellenistic ecumene; the *patria* to the transformation of the Roman empire in late antiquity (cf. § 3).⁵³

As previously stated, the *ktiseis* were written both in prose and in verse. Did *patria* share this kind of structural freedom? What were the formal features of these texts? The sources show a mixed picture in this regard. Diogenes' *Patria of Cyzicus* were a prosecomposition. The unappealing list of names quoted by Stephanus of Byzantium hardly fits any metrical unit (*Ethn.* s.v. Βέσβικος, β 79 Billerbeck = **n. 8, F2**):

Βέσβικος, νησίδιον περὶ Κύζικον, ὡς Διογένης ὁ Κυζικηνὸς ἐν πρώτῃ, περὶ τῶν ἑπτὰ τῆς πατρίδος νήσων λέγων· “Προκόννησος καὶ Φοίβη καὶ Ἀλώνη καὶ Φυσία καὶ Ὀφιοῦσσα καὶ Βέσβικος, γόνιμοι καὶ λιπαραί.”

Besbicus, small island around Cyzicus, as Diogenes of Cyzicus in the first book of *Cyzicus*. He says about the seven islands of his homeland: “Proconnesus, Phoebe, Halone, Physia, Ophioussa and Besbicus, fertile and fruitful”.

Surely in verse were the *patria* of Hermeias and Christodorus. The former wrote his text in iambics (Phot. *Bibl.* cod. 279, 536a, 8–10 = **n. 9, T1**):

Ἐν δὲ τῷ αὐτῷ τεύχει τῷ αὐτῷ περιείχετο μέτρῳ καὶ Ἑρμείου Ἑρμουπολίτου πάτριά τε τῆς Ἑρμουπόλεως καὶ ἕτερά τινα.

In the same volume – written in the same meter (i.e. *iambics*) – are included also Hermias of Hermopolis' *Patria of Hermopolis* and some other works.

⁵³ Saying that the production of *ktiseis* was «pushed» by the changes of the Hellenistic world does not mean that this works were written only during that period. *Ktiseis* kept being written also under the empire: see, for instance, the *Κτίσιν τοῦ ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ Ἀρσινοήτου* («the Foundation of the Arsinoite nome in Egypt») authored by Lupercus of Beirut in the mid-third century AD (cf. *FGrHist* 636 = *BNJ* 636).

Concerning the latter, the *Suda* explicitly says that two of his *patria* were written in hexameters (*Sud.* χ 525 = **n. 6, T1**):

Πάτρια Κωνσταντινουπόλεως ἐπικῶς βιβλία ιβ', Πάτρια
Θεσσαλονίκης ἐπικῶς βιβλία κε'.

Patria of Constantinople in hexameters, twelve books; *Patria of Thessalonica*, in hexameters, twenty-five books.

Given Christodorus' presentation as an "epic poet" (ἐποποιός), one can reasonably suppose that his other *patria* were in hexameters as well.⁵⁴ Concerning the other authors, no formal feature is distinctly noted. In spite of that, some hypotheses can be made. The poetical activity of Soterichus of Oasis makes it plausible that his *Patria of Oasis* were a poetic composition. The same could be posited for Claudianus, the author of some epigrams of the *Palatine Anthology*: Evagrius Scholasticus states that he was one of the most famous poets of Theodosius II's age.⁵⁵ It is more difficult to determine in what form the other attested *patria* were written. The reference to Asclepius' *Patria of Anazarbus* is too vague to provide useful elements. For what concerns the grammarian Horapollon and the sophist Ulpian, the situation is not better. One could rely on their professions to hypothesize prose works, but it is not possible to draw any certain conclusions from that. The sources report examples of sophists and grammarians writing poetic compositions.⁵⁶

As this brief panorama has shown, late antique *patria* seem to share the formal flexibility of the *ktiseis*. Like their Hellenistic counterparts, they could be written both in verse and in prose. Other literary products in antiquity experienced the same formal freedom: an example of this is the writing of panegyrics. These celebratory texts

⁵⁴ Cf. *Sud.* χ 525.

⁵⁵ Cf. *HE I* 19 (28, 17–18).

⁵⁶ See, for instance, the epic compositions of the sophist Scopelian (cf. *Phil. VS* 518) and the «various works in various meters» of the grammarian Serenus (ἐν διαφόροις μέτροις δράματα διάφορα: cf. *Phot. Bibl. Cod.* 279, 536a, 11). For further information about the former, see Anderson 1993, 70; about the latter, see the commentary to **n. 9, T1**.

could be both poetic and prosaic: the different form probably implied different features, but did not question their literary specificity.⁵⁷ Our list, however, reveals that the majority of *patria* was written in verse. Of course, this could be simply due to the fortuitous preservation of the various sources: yet, it is also possible that it reflects a more general tendency. From the literary point of view, one of the main features of late antiquity is the increasing use of poetry at the expense of prose. Compositions which had mostly been the preserve of the latter in imperial age, were “conquered” by the former, which progressively gained more and more influence.⁵⁸ This process must have influenced also the composition of *patria*: being a product of late antique culture, it is not surprising that they would be mainly written in poetry. In one of his essays, Cameron highlighted this aspect, suggesting that the “poems on the mythical origins of cities” were the new layout of earlier proselocal histories.⁵⁹ In this light, one could also suppose that the prose *Patria of Cyzicus* were a transitional stage between the imperial *Heimatsgeschichten* (in prose) and the late antique *patria* (in verse): this interpretation would date Diogenes’ work in the third century AD.⁶⁰ However, nothing precludes a later date, when the writing of poetic *patria* was already a widespread custom, for the grammarian’s prosework. Two elements should be taken into account in this regard. On the one hand, that Soterichus’ *Patria of Oasis* – among the earliest attested *patria* – was written in verse. On the other hand, that later *patria* (such as those of Ulpian) could have easily have been redacted in prose. Meter (or its absence) should not be taken as a precise hint to date these compositions.

If we consider the local focus of *patria*, their connection with local historiography is quite clear: we have already seen how the contents of local histories such as Arrian’s *Bithyniaca* were defined

⁵⁷ About the differences between prose and poetic panegyrics, see Russell 1998, 23–24. For a study on epic panegyrics, see Schlinder 2009. About panegyrics in general, see the studies collected by Whitby 1998.

⁵⁸ Once again, the panegyrics set an example of this tendency. Up to the first half of the third century AD, they were mostly written in prose; in the following centuries, the poetic form prevailed: cf. Cameron 2016, 163–172.

⁵⁹ Cf. 2016, 165–166.

⁶⁰ See also the introduction to **n. 8**.

πάτρια by Byzantine sources. We also highlighted the celebratory aim of these *πάτρια τῆς Βιθυνίας*, which were given by Arrian as a gift to his homeland (cf. § 1). This laudatory aspect must have been particularly strong also in the compositions of Soterichus and the others. The sources provide some examples of that. The epigram introducing Asclepius' *Patria of Anazarbus* says (*AP* IX 195 = **n. 5, T1**):

Κωνσταντινάδης Ἀσκληπιὸς ἄστῳ γεραίρων
γράψεν Ἀναζαρβοῦ πάτρια κυδαλίμης.

Giving honor to the city, Asclepius, the son of Constantine,
wrote the *patria* of the glorious Anazarbus.

The verb γεραίρω (“to honour, to reward”) goes along with the adjective κυδαλίμος (“glorious, renowned”), revealing the celebratory approach of Asclepius' composition. Traces of the same intent are visible also in Diogenes' fragments: in the passage reported by Stephanus of Byzantium (see above), the islands of Cyzicus are defined γόνιμοι καὶ λιπαραί (“fertile and fruitful”), even if the situation was decisively different.⁶¹ That the narration of the origin of a city could be an efficient tool to praise it, is explicitly theorized by Menander. The rhetorician dedicates an entire chapter of his first treatise to the topic, explaining πῶς δεῖ ἀπὸ γένους πόλιν ἐγκωμιάζειν (“how to celebrate a city under the head of origin”).⁶² The authors of *patria* built on this kind of teachings.⁶³ The presence of rhetorical elements is not accidental in texts supposed to be performed in public. This public exposition is confirmed by Simplicius: as was already seen, he inserts the *πάτρια πόλεων* among the “public readings” (ἀκροάσεις). In the same direction goes the testimony of Photius. In the codex including Hermias' *Patria of Hermopolis*, the patriarch found (*Bibl. cod.* 279, 536a, 15–17 = **n. 10, T2**):

⁶¹ See the commentary **n. 8, F2**.

⁶² Cf. *Men.* I 353, 4. See the introduction to **n. 4**.

⁶³ These considerations reduce the distance between *patria* and *laudes urbium* in the form expressed by Dagron: according to him, the latter production was characterized by a strong praising attitude, which would have been absent in the former one (cf. 1985, 9).

Ἔτι δὲ καὶ Ὡραπόλλωνος γραμματικοῦ περὶ τῶν πατρίων
Ἀλεξανδρείας· συντίθησι δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς δράματα τῷ ὁμοίῳ τύπῳ.

Also the work of the grammarian Horapollon on the *patria* of
Alexandria: he also composed dramas in the same form.

Along with the *Patria of Alexandria*, Horapollon authored δράματα τῷ
ὁμοίῳ τύπῳ (“dramas in the same form”). Photius probably makes
reference to other *patria* and defines them δράματα. This lexical choice
seems to imply a dialogical performance, performed by different actors
(an aspect to which I shall return later: cf. § 3).⁶⁴

Having analyzed contents and forms of *patria*, we can add two
other texts to the list: they share all the characteristics we have seen.
The first is an anonymous poem partially preserved by the papyrus *P.*
Oxy. LXIII 4352. It celebrates the deeds of Antinous, the lover of the
emperor Hadrian, and narrates the tragic end of the youth and his
catasterism. Then, it praises the “gift of Hadrian” (δῶρον [...] Ἀδρια[ν]οῦ), i.e. the city of Antinopolis.⁶⁵ The composition is concluded
by a celebration of Diocletian’s government, which is useful to date the
papyrus to the end of the third century AD.⁶⁶ The second is a quite
famous poem: partly transmitted by the fifth-century *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.*
481, it is usually named the “Cosmogony of Strasbourg”. It celebrates the
antiquity of Hermopolis, narrating how the Egyptian city has been
founded by the god Hermes immediately after the creation of the
universe.⁶⁷ The partial lines of another papyrus (*P. Berol.* 9564 = Heitsch
46) have been hypothetically attributed to fragmentary *patria*, but they
are too scant to support the identification.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Cf. Hammerstaedt 1997, 109: see the commentaries to **n. 8, T1** and **n. 9, T1**.

⁶⁵ Cf. **n. 3, F6**.

⁶⁶ See the introduction to **n. 3**.

⁶⁷ For a presentation of the text and the (many) problems it raises, see the
introduction to **n. 4**.

⁶⁸ Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1980, 18–21.

3. Along the Corridors of the Empire

Further information about late antique *patria* comes from their historical context. In order to analyze it, let us list them again, grouping them on the basis of their geographical area:

Egypt:

- Anonymous, *Patria of Alexandria* (before the 6th c. AD)
- Anonymous, *Patria of Antinopolis* (late 3rd c. AD)
- Soterichus of Oasis, *Patria of Oasis* (late 3rd c. AD)
- Anonymous, *Patria of Hermopolis* (between 4th and 5th c. AD)
- Hermias of Hermopolis, *Patria of Hermopolis* (4th c. AD)
- Horapollon, *Patria of Alexandria* (4th c. AD)

Phoenicia, Syria:

- Ulpian, *Patria of Emesa* (early 4th c. AD)
- *id.*, *Patria of Heliopolis* (early 4th c. AD)
- Claudianus, *Patria of Berytus* (first half of the 5th c. AD)
- Christodorus of Coptus, *Patria of Nacle* (late 5th c. – early 6th c. AD)
- Diogenes of Cyzicus, *Patria of Cyzicus* (before the 6th c. AD)

Asia Minor, Greece:

- Ulpian, *Patria of Bosporus* (early 4th c. AD)
- Anonymous, *Patria of Byzantium* (before the 6th c. AD)
- Asclepius, *Patria of Anazarbus* (before the 10th c. AD)
- Claudianus, *Patria of Tarsus* (first half of the 5th c. AD)
- *id.*, *Patria of Anazarbus* (first half of the 5th c. AD)
- *id.*, *Patria of Nicaea* (first half of the 5th c. AD)
- Christodorus of Coptus, *Patria of Constantinople* (late 5th c. – early 6th c. AD)
- *id.*, *Patria of Thessalonica* (late 5th c. – early 6th c. AD)
- *id.*, *Patria of Miletus* (late 5th c. – early 6th c. AD)
- *id.*, *Patria of Tralles* (late 5th c. – early 6th c. AD)
- *id.*, *Patria of Aphrodisias* (late 5th c. – early 6th c. AD)

The most intriguing fact emerging from the list is the absence of *patria* from the Roman west, something that I shall discuss further later (see below). Just as interesting is the geographical distribution of *patria* in the eastern provinces. Between the third and the fourth centuries AD, these works are mostly attested around the two greatest centers of the Roman east, namely Alexandria and Antioch. Moving to the fifth century, one can notice that – except for Berytus and Thessalonica – all the cities addressed by *patria* are placed in Asia Minor.⁶⁹ The historical background is useful to understand these different scenarios.

Throughout the dramatic years of the third-century crisis, Alexandria and Antioch not only maintained the essential role they had already been playing before, but enhanced it. Given the rise of the Sasanid power on the eastern border, the diocese of the East acquired a great importance. The maintenance of the army and the financing of the numerous Persian campaigns made a persistent fiscal current flow toward Antioch, the administrative center of the region.⁷⁰ As soon as the reforms of Diocletian and Constantine more or less stabilized the situation, the consequences of these processes became more evident. The sources point out that the population of Antioch increased for the whole fourth century.⁷¹ On the other side of the diocese, Alexandria balanced this concentration of power and money maintaining its traditional role: furnishing the grain for the imperial *annona*.⁷² The high production of goods such as papyrus, glass and linen, as well as the trades with the east, increased the wealth of a “prosperous, rich, and

⁶⁹ The list does not take into account the two undated works, namely the *Patria of Alexandria* quoted by Malalas, and the *Patria of Byzantium* mentioned by Stephanus. The omission of these two texts does not change the results of the analysis.

⁷⁰ Cf. Mayer 2009, 71–74. On the crisis of the third century and its real extent, see Liebeschuetz 2006; 2007.

⁷¹ Cf. Downey 1958; Liebeschuetz 1972. The city did not reach the population size it had reached during the second century, but that is not surprising: as Brown wrote, the economic boom of the second century AD was something impossible to be reproduced; from an economic point of view, «it is the second century AD that needs explanation, not the fourth» (2012, 9). Anyway, Antioch remained the third largest center of the Empire until the foundation of Constantinople: cf. Metzger 1948, 72. The emperor Constantius and his Caesar Gallus used to have their residence in the city: cf. Barnes 1993, 219, 226.

⁷² Cf. Haas 1997, 41–43.

fruitful city, where no one is idle" (*civitas opulenta, dives, fecunda, in qua nemo vivat otiosus*).⁷³ The social and economic energy of Antioch and Alexandria contributed to improve the urban networks of their areas. Kennedy spoke of an urban boom for late antique Syria.⁷⁴ Between the second half of the third century AD and the first half of the fourth, one finds the first attestations of Egyptian cultural centers different from Alexandria.⁷⁵ The balances of the Roman east were upset by the foundation of Constantinople in 330 AD. In the earlier years of its history, the city of Constantine kept expanding. But it was only with the Theodosian dynasty (379–450 AD) that it fully rose to the status of capital.⁷⁶ The metropolis gave a new attractive center to the whole eastern empire. Like Antioch and Alexandria, it became the hub of a complex urban network and caused the urbanization of areas such as Cappadocia, traditionally outside the “civilized” world.⁷⁷

The beneficial influences of Antioch, Alexandria and Constantinople on the neighboring cities bring to mind what Brown wrote about Valentinian I’s choice of Trier as imperial residence. The decision of the emperor caused a “flow of taxes and supplies” to move to the city. This movement, generated by the presence of the imperial court and justified by the needs of the Rhine army, was the base of an intense growth for the provinces of Britain, Gaul, and even for a part of Spain. When the courts of Valentinian II and Theodosius the Great left Trier, these benefits disappeared.⁷⁸ Brown effectively summarized the process through the expression “corridors of the Empire”.⁷⁹ The same dynamics were at work in the Roman east: political, social, and economic changes gave new weight on particular cities. A large amount of money and resources flowed from the provinces to these cities and caused the economic growth of the surrounding areas. Such a phenomenon did not presuppose just a series of exchanges between the centers and their

⁷³ Cf. *HA Quad. Tyr.* 8, 5–6. For further information about the economy of Alexandria in late antiquity, see Haas 1997, 33–44.

⁷⁴ Cf. Kennedy 1985, 4.

⁷⁵ Cf. Cameron 2016, 2–5.

⁷⁶ Cf. Chantraine 1992; Grig–Kelly 2012, 12–18; Ward–Perkins 2012, 54.

⁷⁷ Cf. Van Dam 2002, 7–69.

⁷⁸ Cf. Brown 2012, *loc. cit.*

⁷⁹ Cf. Brown 2012, 187. The scholar borrows the term from Khoury 1997, 49.

networks, but also a mutual influence between the centers themselves. Indeed, an efficient government of the eastern empire required Alexandria, Antioch and Constantinople to be in constant contact. In the words of Brown, the need contributed to the creation of three great “corridors of the empire”, which connected the three strategic centers of the Roman east: a) Antioch and Alexandria (the Egyptian provisions were necessary to feed the armies guarding the eastern borders);⁸⁰ b) Antioch and Constantinople (the members of the imperial government often moved from the capital to the eastern provinces to face the Persian threat, to solve ecclesiastical problems, or for other reasons);⁸¹ c) Constantinople and Alexandria (every year, 220.000 tons of Egyptian grain were sent to Asia Minor to feed the population of Constantinople, who had obtained the same privilege as the people of Rome).⁸²

This very brief historical sketch allows us to contextualize the position of the cities getting *patria* between the third and the fifth century AD. All of them belonged to the networks of Alexandria, Antioch, and Constantinople, and took advantage of the large-scale corridors unifying the three metropolises. In this perspective, the fifth-century shift from Egypt and Syria towards Asia Minor reflects the new gravitational field produced by Constantinople under the Theodosian dynasty. A few examples can confirm this interpretation. Between the second half of the third century and the first half of the fourth, the sophist Ulpian wrote the *Patria of Emesa*: the Syrian city (modern *Homs*) was located on the Orontes, on the way between Antioch and the strategic trade center of Damascus.⁸³ In the first half of the fifth century, the movements of the court between Constantinople and Ancyra – where the emperors used to spend the summer – provided great wealth to Nicaea (modern *İznik*), situated midway between the two

⁸⁰ Cf. Teall 1959, 91; Vasiliev 1936, 12–13, n. 23.

⁸¹ See, for instance, the movements of Zeno, who spent two years in Antioch as *magister militum per Orientem*, and then returned to Constantinople to become emperor (cf. Croke 2005, 188–190). The same connection between the two cities is evident (in the contrary direction) already in the fourth century AD: an example of that is provided by Constantius’ visits to Constantinople in 342 (cf. Socr. *HE* II 13, 7; Jer. *Chron.* 235^f, *Chron. Min.* I 236), 349 (cf. *Cod. Th.* XII 2, 1; XV 1, 6), and 359 (cf. Amm. XIX 11, 17; XX 8, 1; Socr. *HE* II 41, 1; Soz. *HE* IV 23, 3).

⁸² Cf. Bratianu 1938; Teall 1959, *loc. cit.*; Haas 1997, 41–42.

⁸³ The city was also on the route from Palmyra to the sea: cf. Mango 1991.

residences.⁸⁴ In the same years, Claudianus wrote the *patria* of the city. Under the reign of Anastasius I (491–518 AD), Christodorus of Coptus wrote the *Patria of Miletus*.⁸⁵ Since the re-foundation of Constantinople, the Ionian city (placed near the modern village of *Balat*) had been capitalizing on the passage of the imperial fleet delivering Egyptian corn to the Second Rome.⁸⁶

The link between the writing of *patria* and the heterogeneous urban network of the Roman east could be a coincidence. Still, that this phenomenon is attested only in a particular area (= between Egypt, Syria, and Minor Asia) and for a well-defined period of time (= between the late third century AD and the early sixth) could reveal a deeper connection. One could reasonably argue that the *patria* met the needs of specific cities in that area and in that time. This would explain the success of this literary production in late antique eastern empire. What were these needs? The best way to answer this question is to focus on the contents of *patria*, that is foundation myths. Dealing with Herodotus' concept of 'Ελληνικόν, we have already seen how the Greek world was connected and unified by a shared corpus of elements including kinship, language, religion, and customs (cf. § 1). The cults of the gods and the myths recounting their stories were part of this corpus. From the western colonies to the *poleis* of Asia Minor and beyond, myths and legends constituted the reference system of every Greek. The stories of gods and heroes travelling all around the world and founding cities and sanctuaries, were the bricks of a shared knowledge and the basis of religious cults and local traditions. They created a network of connections between individuals, communities, and peoples. As already said, everyone could find a place inside it, even those who were outside of the "civilized" world.⁸⁷ This network was a powerful element of integration, and could be adapted – in every moment – to the needs of the time.⁸⁸ Let me give some examples.

⁸⁴ Cf. Foss 1996, 12.

⁸⁵ Cf. *FGrHist* 283, 1084 = *BNJ* 283, 1084.

⁸⁶ For further information about Miletus in late antiquity, see Foss 1977, 477–479.

⁸⁷ Cf. Malkin 1998, esp. 1–32.

⁸⁸ Cf. Busine 2014, 221–223; Van Nijf–Williamson 2015.

While invading Thessaly at the end of the sixth century BC, the Thesprotian leader Alevas altered the myth of Phidippus and Antiphus, the legendary kings of the region, and linked it to his mythical ancestor Neoptolemus. By creating a connection between the Thessalian heroes and the son of Achilles, he sought to promote the integration between the Thesprotian invaders and the subjugated population.⁸⁹ A few years later – between the second half of the fifth century BC and the first half of the fourth – the historian Philistus carried out a similar operation in a different context: he injected a Ligurian component into the legend of Siculus, the legendary first ruler of Sicily, suggesting that Sicilians and Ligurians belonged to the same γένος.⁹⁰ Philistus was a strong supporter of Dionysius I of Syracuse, and aimed to encourage the assimilation of the Ligurian mercenaries in the army of the tyrant.⁹¹ In the first half of the third century BC, the Elymians stressed their bond with the Trojan Aeneas at the expense of other eponymous heroes: that facilitated the anti-Punic alliance they made with Rome.⁹² A similar strategy was followed – less than one century later – by the city of Lampsacus, which claimed kinship with Rome via Trojan ancestry, and asked for help against Antiochus III.⁹³ As one can see, all these examples share a background in war: Alevas, Philistus, the Elymians, and Lampsacus exploited the mythical network to legitimate an attack, to integrate different military groups, or to receive help against a distressing neighbor. The use of myth as a factor of social manipulation was not limited to contexts of war, though: it could take place in less traumatic contexts as well. An example of that is provided – at the end of the first century BC – by the Phrygian city of Aizani. In order to access the Hellenic League, its citizens claimed to be of Arcadian descent, and declared that baby Zeus had been nursed in a cave of their territory. This antiquarian operation enabled the obscure city to enter the League: furthermore, it justified the construction of a great sanctuary of Zeus, which attracted visitors and pilgrims from all over Asia Minor.⁹⁴ The

⁸⁹ Cf. Helly 1995, 159; Sordi 2001, 21–22.

⁹⁰ Cf. Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* I 22, 3–4 (= *FGrHist* 556, F46).

⁹¹ Cf. Sordi 2001, 22.

⁹² Cf. Galinsky 1969; Mele 1993–1994; Antonelli 2008, 47–48.

⁹³ Cf. Waterfield 2014, 96.

⁹⁴ Cf. Naumann 1979; Robert 1981; Price 1982; Fox 1986, 68–69.

example of Aizani reveals another important feature of revised myths: they could become a source of civic prestige. Civic prestige could, in turn, generate significant economic benefits.⁹⁵

The cultural importance of myth in the Greco-Roman world, and the social use of its genealogies in the inter-cities relationships provide good insights for the interpretation of the phenomenon of *patria*. As mentioned above, the corridors of the empire between Alexandria, Antioch, and Constantinople deeply influenced the urban hierarchy of the Roman east. On the one hand, these movements of peoples and resources confirmed the status of centers such as Thessalonica or Miletus, which maintained their relevance under the reformed imperial administration; on the other hand, they gave importance and visibility to cities which had traditionally been relegated to the margins of the Hellenized world. These communities in particular had to legitimate their new position in the imperial network, and the best way to achieve this was connecting themselves to the mythical circuits of the Greek world. In my opinion, the *patria* served this purpose. While modeling the collective memory of myths, histories, and traditions of the cities, these works gave them an identity and a precise collocation in the wider context of Greek mythology. For more prestigious centers, the composition of *patria* was a good system to confirm their status.

For a late antique city, this propagandistic operation could be useful on many occasions: for instance, while receiving the official visit of an imperial functionary, or during the celebration of religious festivals and athletic games.⁹⁶ As already noted, the testimonies of Simplicius and Photius confirm that the *πάτρια πόλεων* were publicly performed (cf. § 2). Further evidence is provided by the poem of *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352. Some lines from the final section of the composition – celebrating the messianic reign of Diocletian – directly address the procurator of the Heptanomia. The four verses reveal that the official

⁹⁵ As Fox wrote, «a new civic pedigree could make the reputation of the least known city, and no pedigree was more respected than a link with the gods and founding heroes of Greek myth» (1986, 68–69). Cf. Busine, 2014, *loc. cit.* See also, on a larger scale, the studies collected by Alston–van Nijf–Williamson 2013.

⁹⁶ About the political aspect of these occasions, see Van Nijf 2012.

was present at their presentation (*P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352, F 5. II. v. 32–35 Rea = F 8 v. 32–35 Livrea):

καὶ σὺ δὲ δωτίνην βασιληΐδα πᾶσι γεγηθῶ[ς,
[Ε]πτὰ Νομῶν, ἡγγειλας, ἐπίτροπε. σεῖο δὲ Νεῖλος
μειλιχίην καὶ πρόσθεν ἐπήνεσεν, ὁππότε κεδ[νῆ
εὐδικίῃ δῖεπες Νειλωΐδος ἄστρα Θήβης.

You too gladly announced the royal gift to all,
Procurator of the Heptanomia. In the past, the Nile
already praised your gentleness, when you governed
the cities of Nilotic Thebes with care and integrity.

The poem on Antinous must have been conceived in the context of an official event. One cannot rule out that it was commissioned by the citizens of Antinopolis to welcome the *adventus* of Diocletian's minister. The hypothesis of Rea, who linked the verses to a local festival (such as the sacred games of Antinous, the annual Μεγάλα Ἀντινόεια), does not exclude it.⁹⁷

In order to assimilate a city into the mythological network, it was obviously necessary to adapt the traditional tales to its specificity. If a city claimed to have been founded by Heracles or Theseus, the poets and the antiquarians had to state where, how, and why one of the two heroes had founded it. To answer these questions, they could resort to local traditions: if there was no myth at hand, "there was scope for inventing it".⁹⁸ The *Patria of Hermopolis* partially transmitted by *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 provides a good example of that. The anonymous author takes a myth (= the origin of the world) and adjusts it to the city he wants to celebrate. He promotes the tutelary deity of Hermopolis to the prestigious rank of *artifex mundi*. In doing so, he exploits the autochthonous traditions considering Thot (= Hermes) one of the primeval deities, and the island of *Khmun* (= Hermopolis) the first land to emerge from the sea.⁹⁹ This kind of adaptation was not painless: quite

⁹⁷ Cf. Rea 1996, 1–6.

⁹⁸ Fox 1986, 69.

⁹⁹ Cf. Sauneron–Yoyotte 1959, 26–31; 51–54.

often, the new version of a city happened to collide with that of another one. When the city of Aizani linked the childhood of Zeus to its territory, its claim was contested by other cities boasting the same thing.¹⁰⁰ Other centers of the Roman east competed with Hermopolis for the title of *πρωτέρη* city in the world: one could mention Berytus, founded by Cronos before vomiting his sons;¹⁰¹ Sardis, “the agemate of the Sun” (Ἡελίοιο συνήλικες);¹⁰² Tarsus, “the most ancient city according to the songs” (ἀειδομένη πρωτόπτολις).¹⁰³ The mention of these collisions allows us to introduce another essential element to the discussion. While examining the social context of late antique *patria*, one cannot ignore the importance of Greek particularism.

As Heller’s study has highlighted, the traditional hostilities of the Hellenic world did not stop with the Roman conquest, but went on under the Republic and the Empire.¹⁰⁴ Territorial conflicts, fiscal quarrels, and commercial controversies kept simmering beneath the surface of the *Pax Romana*, even under the peaceful reigns of the Antonines.¹⁰⁵ The well-defined perception of a strong hierarchy between the cities, along with the possibility for them to advance or regress along the pyramid, did not make the situation easier.¹⁰⁶ Given this continuous state of competition, commissioning *patria* brought added value. Evoking the past glory of a city was indeed a very good way to make oneself look better in comparison to a cumbersome neighbor. Reading again the list of *patria*, we can see how many cities could have been interested in this particular aspect: Tarsus and Anazarbus in Cilicia;¹⁰⁷ Cyzicus and Byzantium on the Bosporus;¹⁰⁸ Hermopolis and

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Fox 1986, *loc. cit.* The great variety of myths concerning Zeus’ origin is facetiously pointed out by Callimachus (*Hymn.* 1, 5).

¹⁰¹ Nonn. *D.* XLI 51–154.

¹⁰² Nonn. *D.* XLI 88.

¹⁰³ Nonn. *D.* XLI 357.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Heller 2006, 85–86.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Robert 1977; Jones 1978; Burton 2000; Heller 2006, 86–108.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Heller 2006, 149–162. The competition for the neokorate (i.e. the privilege for maintaining a temple for imperial cult) is a good example of that: cf. Burrell 2004.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Jones 1978, 87; Kaster 1988, 3–7; Sayles 1998, 55–56; Heller 2006, 159–160. Curiously enough, the *patria* of Tarsus and Anazarbus were written by the same author (cf. § 2).

Antinopolis in Egypt.¹⁰⁹ For the first two pairs, we can only make hypotheses: the material is not enough to verify them. The situation is different for the last two cities. The aforementioned *Patria of Antinopolis* provides some interesting evidence. As Gigli Piccardi notes, what remains of the poem seems to celebrate the city of Antinous at the expenses of the rival Hermopolis.¹¹⁰

Additionally, the relevance of the Greek particularism likely explains the absence of *patria* in the Roman west. As already pointed out, no *patria* is attested west of Thessalonica. It is certainly possible that this lack is due to the preservation of sources. However, it can also reveal something more, namely a deeper difference between the western and the eastern halves of the Roman world. In other words, between the Greek and the Roman “souls” of the empire: the former was polycentric, the latter strongly monocentric. The preeminence of Rome was beyond discussion in the western provinces; on the other side of the Mediterranean basin, no Greek city could claim to be the center of the Hellenized world without being mocked by the others. That was also true on the highest level for Alexandria, Antioch, and (later) Constantinople. The urban competition was always stronger in the Greek world than in the Roman. The production of *patria* is (also) a consequence of this mentality.

Far from anticipating the *art for art's sake* principle of Oscar Wilde, late antique *patria* were not the product of simple erudition. On the contrary, they were strictly linked to the needs of their age and reflected the political and social evolution of the Roman east. The administrative reforms undertaken by Diocletian at the end of the third century AD and implemented by his successors in the following decades, deeply changed the urban structure of the empire: while illustrious centers such as Antioch or Alexandria maintained their importance, others, like Seleucia or Laodicea, saw a sharp decline. Other cities passed from a relatively obscure condition to the spotlight: the Megarian colony of Byzantium – transfigured by Constantine the Great

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Hasluck 1910, 192.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Méautis 1918, 164. See also Bunbury–Malouta, 2012.

¹¹⁰ Cf. Gigli Piccardi 2002, 57–58. In this light, the kinship between Hermes (= the founder of Hermopolis) and Antinous (= the tutelary deity of Antinopolis) is particularly interesting: cf. Rea 1996, 10.

into the *Second Rome* – is the most extreme example of that. All these movements altered the urban network of the empire, with some traditional hubs disappearing while others were created. The *πάτρια πόλεων* are one of the products of this process: they were used by the Greek communities to update (or redefine) their position in the Hellenized ecumene, and achieved this purpose through the celebration of their mythical past. In short, it is possible to speak of these works as a sort of “business card”, designed to give a pedigree (or to confirm an existing one) to the Greek cities of the Roman east.

The use of pagan traditions in years of increasing Christianization should not surprise. As Busine demonstrated, Christian authors kept using local myths to celebrate the glory of their cities, “as did their pagan fellow citizens” (2014, 224). In the sixth century AD, the Christian poet Macedonius Consul wrote an epigram praising Sardis.¹¹¹ He referred to the mythical past of the city, linking it to the birth of Zeus¹¹² and to the childhood of Hermes and Dionysus.¹¹³ Inasmuch as the legendary past strengthened the community spirit of the citizens, its value was equally recognized by pagans and Christians. Libanius’ *Antiochicus* provides a good example of that: while addressing a public including both pagans and Christians, the rhetorician praised the antiquity of Antioch, and made explicit reference to the love of Zeus and Io.¹¹⁴ It goes without saying that this approach was not approved by the whole Christian world: some authors drastically refused it, while others took the traditional tales and tried to Christianize them.¹¹⁵ It must be noted, though, that these alternatives did not prevail until the first half of the sixth century AD, when the Bible definitely outclassed the traditional myths as a source of information and prestige. From the reign of Justinian (527–565 AD) onwards, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and saints took the place of gods and heroes in explaining the origins of

¹¹¹ Cf. *AP* IX 645; further information about the poet and his religious belief in Madden 1977.

¹¹² Cf. *AP* IX 645, 3–4.

¹¹³ Cf. *AP* IX 645, 1; 5–6.

¹¹⁴ Cf. *Or.* 11, 44–58; see Busine 2014, 222. The rhetorician does the same while celebrating the antiquity of Nicomedia: cf. *Or.* 26, 92–94.

¹¹⁵ Cf. Busine 2014, 225–231.

cities, monuments, and traditions.¹¹⁶ This change did not alter the urban dynamics of the previous centuries: having put aside gods and heroes of the pagan pantheon, the rival cities turned to Christian figures to compete with each other.¹¹⁷ In this perspective, it is not by chance that the last *patria* we know of – those of Christodorus – come from the age of Anastasius.

In this context, we must take into account the hypothesis formulated by Fournet, who attributed the Christian *Patria of Alexandria* to the mysterious poet Theodorus.¹¹⁸ The scholar found him quoted in the codex *Baroccianus* 142, containing extracts of various ecclesiastical histories.¹¹⁹ One of this excerpt says (F 7, 171 de Boor):

Θεόδωρος δέ τις συνηγορῶν ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ γράψας δι' ἐπῶν ἐν
τρισκαιδεκάτῳ λόγῳ φησὶν, ὅτι καὶ Πιέρος καὶ Ἰσίδωρος ὁ
ἀδελφὸς αὐτοῦ ἐμαρτύρησαν καὶ ναὸν ἔχουσιν ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ
μέγιστον.

A certain Theodorus, advocate in Alexandria, wrote epic verses; he says in the thirteenth book that even Pierus and his brother Isidorus suffered the martyrdom: they have the biggest sanctuary in Alexandria.¹²⁰

Trying to identify the enigmatic advocate, Fournet places him between the late fourth and the fifth centuries AD: this is the moment in which epic poetry on Christian themes starts to be produced on a large scale. Then, noticing the huge dimension of Theodorus' work (the passage quotes the thirteenth book) and its reference to an Alexandrian church, he suggests to consider it what remains of Christian *patria*.¹²¹ As he noted, "il n'est pas inconcevable que [...] les Chrétiens, peut-être sur

¹¹⁶ Cf. Busine 2014, 232–233; 2015, 238–241.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Aliquot 2015, esp. 120–134; Destephen 2015, esp. 67–82.

¹¹⁸ Cf. 2003, esp. 534–536.

¹¹⁹ For a presentation of the manuscript and its contents, see de Boor 1889, 167–168.

¹²⁰ As the scholar highlights, the fragment is reported also by the manuscript *Vatopédi* 290 (148v. coll. I 30–II 24), which eliminates the name of the source: cf. Fournet 2003, 524.

¹²¹ Cf. 2003, 534–536.

commande de l'Église, aient voulu s'adonner aussi à ce genre, ne serait-que pour contrecarrer les œuvres païennes qui circulaient ou tout simplement pour donner aux édifices chrétiens de leur cite d'origine ou de residence, selon le processus proper au genre patriographique, le prestige d'un passé illustre" (2003, 535). Two remarks are necessary here: first, the source does not refer to *πάτρια*, but to a more generic epic work; second, the reference to a church is not enough to recognize late antique *patria*. But this can be taken further. Having seen how easily Christian authors could play with mythological material if it was necessary to celebrate their city, it is possible to dispute the hypothesis of Christian *patria* opposed to pagan ones. Furthermore, if the authors wanted to give an illustrious past to their cults, they could resort to other kinds of texts rather than *patria*: hagiography, for instance, lent itself very nicely to the job.¹²² An example of that is provided by the fifth-century poet Cyrus of Panopolis: after a brilliant career at the court of Theodosius II, he was sent as a bishop to the Phrygian city of Cotyaeum. As Cameron wrote, "it was not long before he discovered what his congregation at Cotyaeum lacked, and, being a literary man, he was able to fill the gap. He gave them a martyr of their very own" (2016, 50).¹²³ In order to strengthen the community spirit of his devotees, he took one of the saints of his homeland and moved his deeds to Phrygia: and just like that, the Egyptian Saint Menas ended up being martyred at Cotyaeum.¹²⁴ In the absence of other explicit references to Christian *patria*, I would not follow Fournet's hypothesis. Theodorus' epos could be linked to the genre of metrical hagiography, a "short-lived tradition" as Sherry noted,¹²⁵ but particularly successful in the fifth century AD. Fournet himself mentioned it as a possible alternative.¹²⁶

¹²² Cf. Busine 2015, 242–247.

¹²³ About Cyrus' life and career, see the commentary to **n. 7, T2**.

¹²⁴ Cf. *BHO* 746. The hypothesis is of Peeters 1950, 32–41 (esp. 39–40).

¹²⁵ Cf. 1991, 425.

¹²⁶ Cf. 2003, 534.

4. Hesychius and beyond: Patriographical literature in Byzantium

No study on late antique *patria* would be complete without a reference to Hesychius the Illustrious' *Patria of Constantinople* (Πάτρια Κωνσταντινουπόλεως κατὰ Ἡσύχιον Ἰλλούστριον). Under this name, the tenth-century codex *Palatinus* 398 presents a brief summary of the history of Constantinople, from its founding by the Thracian king Byzas to the arrival of Constantine the Great.¹²⁷ The title reported by the manuscript, as well as the local focus of its contents, made Cameron consider this work *patria* of Constantine's city, "more akin to Nonnus than Thucydides" (2016, 271). If so, Hesychius' *patria* would be the best preserved work of the kind.

Born in Miletus at the end of the fifth century AD and died in the second half of the sixth, Hesychius the Illustrious wrote three historical works: a world history from the mythical Assyrian figure Belus to the death of Anastasius I (518 AD), an unfinished book on the emperors Justin I (518–527 AD) and Justinian (527–565 AD), and the *Onomatologos*, a collection of biographies of Greek authors.¹²⁸ No source attributes any *patria* to his hand. This silence could be interpreted as a simple omission, of course. Yet, it could also mean something else, namely that the hypothetical *patria* were not autonomous, but extracted from another work. The incipit of the text seems to confirm this (*Patr. Const.* 1–2):

Δύο καὶ ἐξήκοντα καὶ τριακοσίων ἀπὸ τῆς Αὐγούστου Καίσαρος
μοναρχίας διεληλυθότων ἐνιαυτῶν τῇ πρεσβυτέρᾳ Ῥώμῃ καὶ
τῶν πραγμάτων αὐτῆς ἤδη πρὸς πέρας ἀφιγμένων
Κωνσταντῖνος ὁ Κωνσταντίου παῖς ἐπιλαβόμενος τῶν
σκήπτρων τὴν νέαν ἀνίστησι Ῥώμην ἴσην αὐτὴν τῇ πρώτῃ
χρηματίζειν προστάξας. Ἦδη μὲν γὰρ καὶ τυράννοις καὶ
βασιλεῦσι χρησαμένην πολλάκις ἀριστοκρατίας τε καὶ

¹²⁷ Critical text in Preger 1901, 1–18. See also *FGrHist* 390, F7 (= *BNJ* 390, F7).

¹²⁸ For an introduction to the author, see Schultz 1912; Krumbacher 1958; Kaldellis 2005. For an analysis of his fragments, see Kaldellis' extensive commentary in *BNJ* 390.

δημοκρατίας πολιτευσαμένην τρόπῳ τέλος ἐπὶ τὸ προκείμενον <συνέβη> ἐξεννοχῆναι μέγεθος. Λεκτέον δὲ ἡμῖν, ὅπως τε ἐξ ἀρχῆς γέγονε καὶ ὑπὸ τίνων ἀπωκίσθη, ἐκ τῶν ἀρχαίων ποιητῶν καὶ συγγραφέων τὴν ὑπόθεσιν ποιούμενοις.

Two and three score and three hundred years had passed in Elder Rome since Augustus Caesar had established his sole rule and the affairs of that city had already reached their limit; it was then that Constantine, the son of Constantius, lay hold of the scepters of imperial power and built New Rome, decreeing that it be ranked as equal with the first Rome. Having already frequently experienced tyrants and kings and having been governed in the manner of both aristocracy and democracy, finally it reached its prescribed greatness. It is incumbent on us, then, to give an account of how it was originally founded and by whom it was settled, basing our narrative on the poets and authors of old.¹²⁹

The author starts off dating the foundation of Constantinople. In doing so, he notes that an account of the past of the city is necessary. For this reason, he goes back ten centuries and begins recounting the history of Byzantium. The architecture of Hesychius' text – jumping from Constantine to Byzas and progressively returning to the former – is quite odd if taken as an autonomous work: however, it perfectly works as a digression. One could easily suppose that the historian arrived to the founding of Constantine's city and decided to summarize its past history. If we interpret the passage in this way, we can also try to determine which work it came from. Of the two histories of Hesychius, the one moving from Belus to Anastasius is the best candidate: integrating Constantine and his foundation in a history of Justin and Justinian would be quite difficult.¹³⁰ According to the *Suda*, the work was

¹²⁹ Translation of Kaldellis (*BNJ* 390, F7).

¹³⁰ So the majority of scholars dealing with the topic: cf. Müller (*FHG* IV 144); Preger 1901, VI; Dagron 1985, 23–29; Kaldellis 2005, 395–398; Van Nuffelen 2010. *Contra* Christ-Schmidt-Stählin 1924, 1039 and *PLRE* II, 555 ('Hesychius "Illustrius" 14'); they hypothesized that the digression came from the second work. A different interpretation was provided by Tinnefeld: «Unter dem Titel xlviii

entitled Χρονικὴ ἱστορία (“Chronological History”) and was divided in six διαστήματα (“intervals”).¹³¹ Their contents are summarized by Photius (*Bibl. cod.* 69, 34a, 41–34b, 32):

Ἀρχεται μὲν οὖν ἀπὸ τῆς τοῦ Βήλου τοῦ Ἀσσυρίων βασιλέως βασιλείας, κάτεισι δὲ μέχρι τῆς τελευτῆς Ἀναστασίου, ὃς Ῥωμαίων γέγονεν αὐτοκράτωρ [...]. Διαιρεῖται δὲ αὐτῷ τὸ σπούδασμα εἰς τμήματα ἕξ, ὧν τὸ μὲν πρῶτον τμήμα περιέχει τὰ πρὸ τῶν Τρωϊκῶν, τὸ δὲ δεύτερον τὰ ἀπὸ Ἰλίου ἀλώσεως ἕως τῆς κτίσεως Ῥώμης, τὸ δὲ τρίτον τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς κτίσεως Ῥώμης μέχρις ὅτου Ῥωμαίοις ἡ τῶν ὑπάτων εἰσῆχθη ἡγεμονία καταλύσασι τοὺς βασιλέας κατὰ τὴν ὀγδόην καὶ ἐξηκοστὴν Ὀλυμπιάδα, τὸ δὲ τέταρτον, ἐξ οὗπερ Ῥωμαίων ἡγήσαντο ὑπατοί, ἦτοι ἀπὸ τῆς ὀγδόης καὶ ἐξηκοστῆς ὀλυμπιάδος, μέχρι δευτέρας καὶ ὀγδοηκοστῆς καὶ ἑκατοστῆς ὀλυμπιάδος, οὗ καὶ ἔληξεν ἡ τοιαύτη ἀρχὴ Ἰουλίου τοῦ Καίσαρος μοναρχήσαντος. Τὸ δὲ πέμπτον τμήμα περιέχει τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰουλίου τοῦ Καίσαρος μοναρχίας μέχρις ὅτου Βυζάντιον ἐπὶ μέγα δόξης ἰσχύος ἦρθη, ὀλυμπιάδος ἑβδόμης καὶ ἑβδομηκοστῆς καὶ διακοσιοστῆς ἱσταμένης. Τὸ δὲ ἕκτον, ἐξ οὗ βασιλέα Κωνσταντινούπολις εὐτύχησε Κωνσταντῖνον μέχρι τῆς Ἀναστασίου τελευτῆς [...]. οὗ συνέπεσεν ἡ τελευτὴ κατὰ τὴν ἐνδεκάτην ἰνδικτιῶνα, Μάγνου μόνου ὑπατεύοντος. Ἡ δὲ περιοχὴ τῶν χρόνων χιλίων καὶ ἐνενήκοντα καὶ ἑκατόν. Ἐν οἷς καὶ ἡ συγγραφὴ.

It begins with the reign of Belos, king of the Assyrians, and goes down to the death of Anastasios, who was emperor of the Romans [...]. His work is divided into six sections, of which the first section comprises an account of events before the Trojan

Páttria (‘Lokalgeschichte’) katá Hēsýchion Illústrion (Pseudo-H.) ist eine wohl im 10. Jh. [...] entstandene (verkürzte?) Neufassung eines Exkurses überliefert, welcher dem 6. Buch des Geschichtswerkes vorgeschaltet war» (1998, 516). Although a rielaboration of the excursus is not implausible, the attribution to another author is not necessary.

¹³¹ Cf. η 611. Photius speaks of a «Roman and General History» (ἱστορία Ῥωμαϊκὴ τε καὶ παντοδαπή: cf. *Bibl. cod.* 69, 34a 40–41): the expression has been considered one of the titles of Hesychius’ work (cf. Kaldellis 2005, 382).

War; the second, from the fall of Troy to the founding of Rome; the third, from the founding of Rome to the point when the Romans expelled the kings and introduced the rule of the consuls in the sixty-eighth Olympiad; the fourth, from the moment when the consuls led the Romans, namely from the sixty-eighth Olympiad, down to the one-hundred and eighty-second Olympiad, when this type of regime came to an end with the monarchy of Julius Caesar. The fifth section comprises events from the monarchy of Julius Caesar down to the point when Byzantium reached the pinnacle of its reputation for power, namely at the beginning of the two-hundred and seventy-seventh Olympiad; the sixth, from the time when Constantinople had the good fortune to be ruled by Constantine down to the death of Anastasios [...]. His death occurred in the eleventh indiction, when Magnos was sole consul. The time-scale is then one thousand one hundred and ninety years, and this is the period covered by his work.¹³²

The account of Constantine's foundation must come either from the end of the fifth section, or from the start of the sixth. The reference to Augustus' μοναρχία at the beginning of it confirms this hypothesis. The reign of the first Roman *princeps* had indeed a prominent role in the architecture of Hesychius' work: it was far more important that the dictatorship of his uncle Julius Caesar, which closed the fourth διάστημα and opened the fifth. Evidence of that comes from another fragment of the history (Const. Porph. *De Them.* 2, 8):

νικήσας ὁ Καῖσαρ τὸν Ἀντώνιον καὶ τὴν Κλεοπάτραν ἔκτισεν πόλιν, καλέσας αὐτὴν Νικόπολιν, διὰ τὸ ἐκεῖσε ἡττηθῆναι τὸν Ἀντώνιον. ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦ ἀκρωτηρίου τοῦ καλουμένου Ἀκτίου καὶ τὰς καλουμένας ἰνδικτιῶνας ἐκάλεσεν. οὕτω γὰρ γράφει Ἡσύχιος ὁ Ἰλλούστριος· “ἰνδικτιῶν τουτέστιν ἰνακτιῶν ἢ περὶ τὸ Ἄκτιον νίκη· διὰ τοῦτο ἄρχεται μὲν ἰνδικτιῶν ἀπὸ πρώτης καὶ καταλήγει μέχρι τῆς ιε΄· καὶ πάλιν ὑποστρέφει καὶ ἄρχεται ἀπὸ πρώτης, διὰ τὸ τὸν Ἀντώνιον συνάρχοντα γενέσθαι Αὐγούστῳ

¹³² Translation of Kaldellis (*BNJ* 390, F1).

τῷ Καίσαρι μέχρι τοῦ ιε' χρόνου, μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα μόνος ἐκράτησεν Αὐγούστος”.

Having defeated Antony and Cleopatra, Caesar built a city and called it Nikopolis because that was where Antony was defeated. And from the promontory called Actium he derived the name of the so-called indictions. This is what Hesychius the Illustrious writes: “indiktion: namely inaktion, the victory at Actium. It is for this reason that the indiction begins at 1 and ends at 15, and then goes back and begins again at 1, namely that Antony ruled jointly with Caesar Augustus for fifteen years, but after that Augustus ruled alone”.¹³³

Hesychius linked the battle of Actium to the origin of indictions (i.e. the cycles of fifteen years traditionally used to measure time). According to him, the first indiction started along with the defeat of Marc Antony and the sole rule of Augustus.¹³⁴ That the timing of the Χρονικὴ ἱστορία was based on a succession of indictions is proved by the summary of Photius, who notes that the emperor Anastasius’ death συνέπεσεν [...] κατὰ τὴν ἐνδεκάτην ἰνδικτιῶνα, “occurred in the eleventh indiction” (see above). We can say, therefore, that the monarchy of Augustus was used as a chronological touchstone. That explains why the text of the *Palatinus* 398 dates the foundation of Constantinople “two and three score and three hundred years [...] since Augustus Caesar had established his sole rule” (δύο καὶ ἑξήκοντα καὶ τριακοσίων ἀπὸ τῆς Αὐγούστου Καίσαρος μοναρχίας).

Having identified the hypothetical *Patria of Constantinople* as a (more or less reworked) section of Hesychius’ history, one can exclude it from the corpus of late antique *patria*. The title provided by the manuscript refers more to the contents of the text (= the *πάτρια* of Constantine’s city) than to its original genre. Indeed, the digression deals with the local history of Byzantium: we have already seen how the substantive *πάτρια* could refer to this kind of literary production. As regards the hypothesis of Cameron, I would like to make two

¹³³ To translate the passage, I adapted the text of Kaldellis (*BNJ* 390, F5).

¹³⁴ Cf. *BNJ* 390, F5. See also Grumel 1958, 192–203.

observations: the first one concerns Hesychius' use of etymologies, the second the development of his narrative. Cameron noted: "that Hesychius' *Patria* was not history in the accepted sense is proved by the frequency [...] of aetiologies for local monuments" (2016, 271). The assumption is quite disputable. As Kaldellis rightly pointed out, etymologies *et similia* are very important also in the fragments clearly coming from Hesychius' history: we have just seen what the historian wrote about the origin of indictions.¹³⁵ The same focus on aetiology is found in other contemporary historical texts: the *Chronographia* of John Malalas, for instance, presents this kind of notes.¹³⁶ For what concerns the structure of Hesychius' narrative, both Kaldellis and Cameron highlighted the sudden jump from the early history of Byzantium to the Macedonian siege: the latter, in particular, interprets it as a consequence of the ahistorical nature of the text.¹³⁷ Such a drastic judgment is not necessary. Hesychius' account was a digression in a longer narrative: a selection of topics is not strange at all. That said, nothing prevented the author from using earlier or contemporary *patria* (e.g. Christodorus' Πάτρια Κωνσταντινουπόλεως) as sources: Stephanus of Byzantium used them almost in the same years (cf. § 3). Hesychius declares that he got the information on the history of Byzantium "from old poets and historians" (ἐκ τῶν ἀρχαίων ποιητῶν καὶ συγγραφέων). The reference to poetic works could confirm the use of *patria*. That Hesychius knew these texts could also be proven by another element: as already said, the sources list an *Onomatologos* among his works. While introducing this "biographical dictionary", the *Suda* notes (η 611):

ἔγραψεν Ὀνοματολόγον ἢ Πίνακα τῶν ἐν παιδείᾳ ὀνομαστῶν, οὗ ἐπιτομή ἐστὶ τοῦτο τὸ βιβλίον.

He wrote the *Onomatologos*, or *Index of Eminent Literary Figures*: this book is an epitome of it.

¹³⁵ Cf. Kaldellis 2005, 385.

¹³⁶ See, for instance, *Chron.* VII 10–13, with the origin of the month February.

¹³⁷ Cf. Kaldellis 2005, 395–396; Cameron 2016, 271.

The entry reveals that the *Suda* epitomizes Hesychius' book. If the connection between the *Onomatologos* and the encyclopedia were true, the entries presenting the *patria* of Diogenes, Ulpian, and Christodorus could be attributed to the historian.¹³⁸

Along with other texts, Hesychius' digression has been embodied in a Byzantine compilation, usually labelled *Patria of Constantinople*. Originally attributed to the fourteenth-century couropalate George Codinus, this corpus of texts was actually collected four centuries before, during the reign of Basil II (976–1025 AD).¹³⁹ It contains a series of works dealing with the antiquities of Constantinople. The first is a local history of the city (πάτρια Κωνσταντινουπόλεως), and incorporates Hesychius' text.¹⁴⁰ It is followed by works *On Statues* (περὶ στηλῶν),¹⁴¹ *On Councils* (περὶ συνόδων), *On Foundations* (περὶ κτισμάτων), and *On Saint Sophia* (περὶ τῆς ἁγίας Σοφίας). The material used to compile these texts comes from many sources: among them, one must quote the *Brief Historical Notes* (παραστάσεις σύντομοι χρονικαί) and the *Exposition on Saint Sophia* (δύγησις περὶ τῆς Ἀγίας Σοφίας).¹⁴² The result is a collection summarizing the cultural history of

¹³⁸ Cf. *Sud.* δ 1146, ο 911, χ 525. In her edition, Adler attributed the three entries to Hesychius' text: cf. 1931, 102; 1933, 587; 1935, 827. For a discussion of the problem, see Kaldellis 2005, 387–389.

¹³⁹ Probably in 995: cf. Dagron 1985, 48–53.

¹⁴⁰ Hesychius' text is embodied without the first two paragraphs, i.e. without the chronological reference to the founding of Constantinople (cf. Preger 1907, 1). This omission is particularly interesting: it reveals the aims of the anonymous collector and confirms what we said of Hesychius' account. As already seen, the «circular» structure moving from Constantine to Byzas and vice versa, reflects the original function of the text: a digression within a longer narration, its aim was to interrupt it, announcing an important episode (i.e. the foundation of Constantine's city) and informing the reader about the past events that had led to that. In the case of Pseudo-Codinus' work, things are different: the text does not interrupt any storytelling, but is placed at the beginning of everything. For this reason, it does not need any cross-reference forwards or backwards, but can just follow a linear development. That explains the removal of the first sentences. See Dagron 1985, 26–27.

¹⁴¹ As the title reveals, it includes also a presentation of Adiabene (ἐν ᾧ καὶ περὶ Ἀδιαβηνῆς): cf. Preger 1907, 151.

¹⁴² About the *Brief Historical Notes* see the study of Av. Cameron–Herren 1984. About the *Exposition* (and its use by Pseudo-Codinus' work), see Dagron 1985, 191–314.

Constantine's city from its ancestral past to the most recent days.¹⁴³ The rich textual tradition shows how successful the operation was: in his edition of the *Patria*, Preger collated sixty-four codices.¹⁴⁴ Dagron interpreted Pseudo-Codinus' selection as a "œuvre témoin" (1985, 50) of what he defined a "genre patriographique" (1985, 53). As the scholar pointed out, the anonymous collector fixed "la tradition des *Patria* [...] en un corpus qui subit relativement peu de modifications au cours des siècles" (1985, 50).

The most evident element of Byzantine patriographical literature is its composite character. Corpora such as the tenth-century *Patria of Constantinople* include texts of a very different nature, often altering them. Pseudo-Codinus' manuscripts exemplify this tendency. As Av. Cameron and Herrin noted, they are quite divergent in style, contents and arrangement of the material: rather than a coherent corpus, they seem a "growing body of material [...] in which fidelity to an original text is far from being the prime concern" (1984, 5). Dagron was aware of that: leaving aside the formal features, he groups the patriographical texts on the basis of their approach towards history. As he explained, "les récits patriographiques sont des histoires détachées de l'Histoire et retraitées à d'autres fins [...]. On fait basculer le texte d'un système de référence essentiellement historique et secondairement topographique dans un autre essentiellement topographique et secondairement historique" (1985, 53–54). Such an interpretation can be applied to numerous works. That the texts usually defined as "patriographical" were of different kinds was clear already to the Byzantines: it is not by chance, for instance, that all the writings of Pseudo-Codinus have different titles. As already said, the only text explicitly entitled *πάτρια Κωνσταντινουπόλεως* is the local history of the city. Scholars have extended the use of the word to the entire corpus, but the manuscripts do not do that. If we consider the meaning of the substantive *πάτρια* (cf. § 1), the scholarly use is licit. However, it is necessary to ensure that the Byzantine *Patria of Constantinople* are not confused with or made equal to the late antique *πάτρια πόλεων*. They

¹⁴³ Dagron spoke of a «petite encyclopédie des "antiquités" de la capitale» (1985, 60).

¹⁴⁴ Cf. 1907, V–XIX.

are indeed with different phenomena, separated by centuries and not always focusing on the same material.

As shown above, the diffusion of late antique *patria* in the eastern Roman empire gave voice to the strong particularism of Greek cities: in other words, these texts reflected the polycentrism of the Hellenized ecumene (cf. § 3). In contrast, the Byzantine *Patria of Constantinople* are exclusively focused on Constantine's city, the center of the Byzantine world. Whereas late antique *patria* can be seen as a sort of civic epics, narrating the foundation of cities and their most important historical episodes (cf. § 2), the Byzantine counterparts collect much more material: as the Pseudo-Codinus' corpus demonstrates, they could also describe ecclesiastical councils, that are scarcely linked to the local history of Constantinople. Were it not for the vague meaning of the adjective, one could define them as more antiquarian.¹⁴⁵ This aspect allows us to take into account the last main difference: late antique *patria* involved pagan myths (cf. § 2), the Byzantine ones included Christian stories as well. Even if these three distinctions do not cancel the elements shared by both productions (e.g. their importance in boosting civic cohesion),¹⁴⁶ they are enough to distinguish them as two different types of literary products. That said, one could suggest that the Byzantine *Patria of Constantinople* were just a later stage of the late antique *πάτρια πόλεων*, but it is almost impossible to find any evidence for the link. Another element must be considered: behind works such as the *παραστάσεις*, or the *περὶ στηλῶν* there must have been a wider amount of sources than only late antique *patria*. As Av. Cameron and Herrin noted, chronicles such as those of Marcellinus Comes and Malalas could have influenced the exposition of their Byzantine successors.¹⁴⁷ *Rebus sic stantibus*, I would maintain the separation between the late antique *πάτρια πόλεων* and the later texts on the antiquities of Constantinople.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Drijvers–Focanti–Praet–Van Nuffelen (*forthcoming*).

¹⁴⁶ Cf. Dagron 1985, 54–55.

¹⁴⁷ Av. Cameron–Herrin 1984, 3.

5. About this Edition

To conclude, some notes about the present edition. As mentioned above, it is the first attempt to collect in a single and coherent corpus testimonies and fragments of late antique *patria*. The collection includes twelve authors, organized alphabetically: the difficult dating of some of them makes a chronological disposition not functional. Here is a list of the authors and texts:

1. anonymous *Patria of Alexandria* (quoted by John Malalas);
2. anonymous *Patria of Byzantium* (cited by Stephanus of Byzantium);
3. anonymous *Patria of Antinoupolis* (reported by *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352);
4. anonymous *Patria of Hermopolis* (preserved by *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481);
5. Asclepius of Anazarbus, *Patria of Anazarbus*;
6. Christodorus of Coptus, *Patria of Constantinople, Thessalonica, Nacle, Miletus, Tralles, Aphrodisias*;
7. Claudianus, *Patria of Tarsus, Anazarbus, Beritus, Nicaea*;
8. Diogenes of Cyzicus, *Patria of Cyzicus*;
9. Hermias of Hermopolis, *Patria of Hermopolis*;
10. Horapollon, *Patria of Alexandria*;
11. Soterichus of Oasis, *Patria of Oasis*;
12. Ulpian, *Patria of Emesa, Heliopolis, Bosporus*.

For each author, the edition provides a general introduction, the critical text of testimonies and fragments, the translation, and an extensive philological, literary, and historical commentary.

As regards the choice of the fragments, I included only passages explicitly naming the authors and their *patria*, and nameless fragments whose attribution is made clear by their contents.¹⁴⁸ Since this is a collection of *patria*, I did not edit fragments quoting other works of Soterichus and his colleagues: other historical repertoires report them, Jacoby's *Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker* in primis. In some cases,

¹⁴⁸ See, for instance, **n. 2, F2**.

though, these passages have been edited as testimonies: indeed, they provide information about the literary activity of their writers. The critical apparatus of testimonies and fragments is positive.

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1. Abbreviations

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- BGU* AAVV. (1895–1912) *Ägyptische Urkunden aus den Staatliche Museen Berlin. Griechische Urkunden*, Berlin.
- BHO* Peeters, P. (1910) *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Orientalis* (Subsidia Hagiographica, 10), Brussels.
- BNJ* Worthington, I. (2007–) *Brill's New Jacoby*, Online:
< <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/brill-s-new-jacoby> >.
- CE* Atiya, A.S. (1991) *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, 8 Volumes, New York.
- CIL* AAVV. (1862–) *Corpus inscriptionum latinarum. Consilio et auctoritate Academiae Litterarum Regiae Borussicae editum*, 17 Volumes, Berlin.
- D.-K.* Diels, H. – Kranz, W. (1934–1937) *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, Fifth Edition, Berlin.
- DNP* Cancik, H. – Schneider, H. (1996–2002) *Der Neue Pauly. Enzyklopädie der Antike*, 12 Volumes, Stuttgart – Weimar.
- FGrHist* Jacoby, F. (1923–1958) *Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker*, 18 Volumes, Berlin.
- FHG* Müller, K. – Müller, T. (1841–1870) *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum*, 5 Volumes, Paris.
- Heitsch* Heitsch, E. (1965) *Die griechischen Dichterfragmente der römischen Kaiserzeit*, vol. 1, Göttingen (Second Edition).
- IG* Kirchhoff, A. et al. (1860–) *Inscriptiones Graecae*, 49 volumes, Berlin.
- LDAB* Clarysse, W. et al. (1998–) *Leuven Database of Ancient Books*, Online:
< <http://www.trismegistos.org/ldab/> >.
- LSJ* Liddell, H.G. – Scott, R. – Jones, H.S. – McKenzie, R. (1996) *A Greek–English Lexicon*, Ninth Edition, Oxford.

MP ³	Marganne, M.-H. – Renard, D. (1999–2013) <i>The Mertens-Pack³ Database Project</i> , Online: < http://cipl93.philo.ulg.ac.be/Cedopal/MP3/dbsearch.aspx >.
ODB	Kazhdan, A.P. (1991) <i>The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium</i> , New York – Oxford.
Pack ²	Pack, R.A. (1965) <i>The Greek and Latin Literary Texts from Greco-Roman Egypt</i> , Second edition, Ann Arbor.
Page	Page, D.L. (1941) <i>Selected Papyri. Poetry</i> , Cambridge (Ma.) – London.
PCG	Kassel, R. – Austin, C. (1983–2001) <i>Poetae Comici Graeci</i> , 8 Volumes, Berlin – New York.
PGM	Preisendanz, K. (1928–1931) <i>Papyri Graecae magicae / Die griechischen Zauberpapyri</i> , 2 Volumes, Stuttgart.
PMG	Page, D.L. (1962) <i>Poetae Melici Graeci; Alcmanis, Stesichori, Ibyci, Anacreontis, Simonidis, Corinnae, poetarum minorum reliquias, carmina popularia et convivialia quaeque adespota feruntur</i> , Oxford.
PLRE	Martindale, J.R. – Morris, J. – Jones, A.H.M. (1971–1992) <i>The prosopography of the later Roman Empire</i> , 3 Volumes, Cambridge.
RAC	Klauser, Th. et al. (1950–2015) <i>Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum. Sachwörterbuch zur Auseinandersetzung des Christentums mit der antiken Welt</i> , 27 Volumes, Stuttgart.
RE	Pauly, A.F. et al. (1893–1980) <i>Pauly's Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> , 80 Volumes, Stuttgart.
TGF	Snell, B. – Radt, S. – Kannicht, R. (1971–2004) <i>Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta</i> , 5 Volumes, Göttingen.
TLG	Pantelia, M. et al. (2001–) <i>Thesaurus Linguae Graecae</i> , Online: < http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/index.php >.
TM	Depauw, M. et al. (2014) <i>Trismegistos Texts Database</i> , Online: < http://www.trismegistos.org/index2.php >.

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**THE FRAGMENTS OF
LATE ANTIQUE *PATRIA***

Tabula Notarum in Apparatibus Adhibitarum

Notae quae ad fragmenta pertinent:

***	lacuna textus
< >	litterae additae
[...]	textus omissus

Notae quae ad papyros pertinent:

...	lacuna textus
]	lacuna in principio lineae
[	lacuna in fine lineae
[]	lacuna in corpore lineae
[[]]	litura scribae
‘ ’	emendatio scribae
.	littera incerta
alt. m.	altera manus
e.g.	exempli gratia
sum.	summum
v.	versus
vac.	vacuum
vv.	versus

Cetera:

add.	addidit
cod.	codex, codice
codd.	codices, codicibus
corr.	correxerunt
del.	delevit
dub.	dubitanter
in app.	in apparato
om.	omiserunt
prop.	proposuit
scr.	scripsit

secl.

seclustit

Notae codicum editorumque:

Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus

C

Parisinus gr. 854 (13th c.)

Pertusi

Pertusi 1952

Van Meurs

Van Meurs 1617

Eunapius

Giangrande

Giangrande 1956

Evagrius Scholasticus

A

Laurentianus LXX 23 (12th c.)

B

Baroccianus 142 (14th c.)

L

Laurentianus LXIX 5 (11th c.)

P

Patmiacus 688 (13th c.)

$$\mathbf{Z}$$

consensus of codices LPB

Bidez – Parmentier

Bidez – Parmentier 1964

V

vulgata (= Reading 1713)

John Lydus

P

Caseolinus Parisinus suppl. gr. 257 (9th – 10th c.)

P_2

corrector of P

Bandy

Bandy 1982

John Malalas

EI

Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, *Excerpta de*

insidiis

O	<i>Baroccianus</i> 182 (12 th c.)
Sl	Slavonic Malalas (= Istrin 1994)

Chilmead	Chilmead 1691
Dindorf	Dindorf 1831
Thurn	Thurn 2000

John Tzetzes

Leone	Leone 1968
Müller	Müller 1811
Scheer	Scheer 1908

Libanius

Bradbury	Bradbury 2004
Foerster	Foerster 1903–1927

Palatine Anthology

A	scribe A of P
apogr. Buher.	<i>apographus codicis Buheriani</i>
C	corrector of P
P	<i>Palatinus</i> 23 (ca. 980)
Plan.	<i>Planudean Anthology</i>

Brunck	Brunck 1785
Jacobs	Jacobs 1817

Photius

Bekker	Bekker 1824
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P. Oxy. LXIII 4352

Π	papyrus
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Livrea	Livrea 2002
Rea	Rea 1996

P. Stras. Gr. Inv. 481

II	papyrus
----	---------

Gigli Piccardi	Gigli Piccardi 1990
Heitsch	Heitsch 1965
Kaibel	Kaibel (in Reitzenstein)
Livrea	Livrea 2002
Pack	Pack (in Gigli Piccardi)
Reitzenstein	Reitzenstein 1901
Schwartz	Schwartz (in West)
Treu	Treu 1973
West	West 1963
Wifstrand	Wifstrand (in Heitsch)
Zieliński	Zieliński 1941

Scholia to the Greek Anthology

Hall	Hall 1985
------	-----------

Scholia to Homer's Iliad

A	<i>Venetus gr.</i> 822 (10 th c.)
---	--

Erbse	Erbse 1969
Müller	<i>FHG</i> IV 360–361
Villoison	De Villoison 1788

Stephanus of Byzantium

N	<i>Neapolitanus</i> III.AA.18 (ca. 1490)
P	<i>Vaticanus Palatinus gr.</i> 57 (before 1492)
Q	<i>Vaticanus Palatinus gr.</i> 253 (before 1485)
R	<i>Rehdigeranus</i> 47 (ca. 1500)

Billerbeck	Billerbeck 2006–2015
Cuypers	<i>BNJ</i> 474
Holstein	Holstein 1692
Meineke	Meineke 1849
Schwartz	Schwartz 1903
Van Berkel	Van Berkel 1688
Vossius	Vossius (in Westerman 1838)
Westermann	Westermann 1839

Suda

A	<i>Parisinus gr.</i> 2625, <i>pars vetustior</i> (13 th c.)
Ar	<i>Parisinus gr.</i> 2626, <i>manus recentiores</i> (15 th c.)
F	<i>Laurentianus</i> 55, 1 (1422)
G	<i>Parisinus gr.</i> 2623 (15 th c.)
I	<i>Angelicanus</i> 75 (15 th c.)
M	<i>Marcianus</i> 448 (13 th c.)
S	<i>Vaticanus</i> 1296 (1205)
T	<i>Vaticanus</i> 881 (1434)
V	<i>Vossianus Bibliothecae Lugdunensis</i> (12 th c.)

Adler	Adler 1928–1938
Basil.	<i>Editio Basileensis</i> (1549)
Bernhardy	Bernhardy 1834–1853
Daub	Daub (in Adler)
Gutschmid	Gutschmid (in Adler)
Hermann	Hermann (in Bernhardy)
Jacoby	<i>FGrHist</i> 474, 676
Kuster	Kuster 1705
Saumaise	Saumaise (in Van Berkel)

1.

ANONYMOUS PATRIA OF ALEXANDRIA **(FGrHist 630a; BNJ 630a)**

Introduction

After the description of Cleopatra's suicide, John Malalas makes reference to the fate of her corpse (cf. **F1**). The chronicler quotes a certain Theophilus, whose identity is not clear (see below). According to the σοφὸς χρονογράφος, the body of Cleopatra was embalmed and sent to Rome as a favor to Octavian's sister. After mentioning this version (which does not find confirmation in any other source), Malalas reports the different view of "those who expounded the πάτρια of the great Alexandria" (οἱ δὲ ἐκθέμενοι τὰ πάτρια Ἀλεξανδρείας τῆς μεγάλης): according to these unspecified authors, the queen was left in Egypt (see below). The divergence about the fate of Cleopatra – the chronicler notes – is not unique. Other discrepancies between local and Roman accounts can be found elsewhere.

The identification of these authors is quite difficult, and the passage itself is ambiguous. Indeed, the word πάτρια can be interpreted in two ways: on the one hand, as referring to late antique *patria* that focused on the history of Alexandria; on the other hand, as a reference to antiquarian information about the Egyptian city, contained in works of a different nature (in classicizing histories, chronicles, etc.). The verb used by Malalas is too vague to help us, and the Slavonic translation of the *Chronography* does not provide further elements (see below).

Giving an identity to the authors of the πάτρια is problematic as well. The sources mention some poets and historians, who dedicated their works to the Egyptian Alexandria: they mention, for instance, Callixenus of Rhodes, who wrote a treaty Περὶ Ἀλεξανδρείας;¹⁴⁹ Aelius Dius, the author of a work with the same title;¹⁵⁰ and the grammarian Horapollon, who composed a Περὶ τῶν πατρίων Ἀλεξανδρείας in iambic

¹⁴⁹ Cf. *FrGrHist* 627, F1 = *BNJ* 627, F1.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. *FGrHist* 629, T1 = *BNJ* 629, T1.

meter (cf. **n. 10**). However, many others works on the same topic may have existed but are not preserved. Linking the testimony of Malalas to the scant names we have at our disposal would be naïve, above all while dealing with such an important city as Alexandria of Egypt.

The impossible identification of Malalas' sources makes a study of their use particularly difficult. We are not able to say if the chronicler had direct access to the *πάτρια Ἀλεξανδρείας*, or if he found the information about the corpse of Cleopatra in an intermediate source. Truthfully, this is a problem concerning almost all the authorities named by the *Chronographia*.¹⁵¹ The solution to the problem depends on the connections between Malalas and his sources. Those who follow the traditional interpretation and attribute just a few direct sources to the first fourteen books of the *Chronographia* will probably hypothesize an indirect quote.¹⁵² On the other hand, those who acknowledge a more extended group of sources may conjecture a direct consultation of the antiquarian material (although this second perspective does not impede an indirect reference either).¹⁵³ The debate involves the note on the discrepancies between local and Roman accounts as well. A direct use of the *πάτρια* links the observation to Malalas himself, who consulted the material and noticed its different contents; an indirect reading attributes it to the intermediary source.

As all these unknowns show, a proper reconstruction of the *πάτρια Ἀλεξανδρείας τῆς μεγάλης* is not possible. The nature of these texts remains problematic and the identity of their authors is mysterious as well. It is not possible to say how Malalas had access to them, or how he used their works to write his chronicle. The same uncertainty pertains to their contents. Other passages of the *Chronographia* explain the origins of Alexandrian monuments without referring to a precise authority: linking them to the *πάτρια* mentioned

¹⁵¹ Cf. Van Nuffelen 2016, 261.

¹⁵² See the studies of Bourier (1899) and Jeffreys (1990), who link the *Chronographia* to three direct sources (*i.e.* Domninus, Nestorianus and Timothy), and the analysis of Treadgold (2007, 246-256), who reduces them to a single one (*i.e.* Eustathius of Epiphania).

¹⁵³ For this second position, see Van Nuffelen 2016, 266–271.

by our fragment is tempting, but their dependence on these sources cannot be proved.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵⁴ See five passages in particular: *Chron.* VIII 1, 6–10 Thurn (= the foundation of Alexandria by Alexander the Great, who constructs the Serapeum and a public bath); IX 6, 60–62 (= the edification of the *Caesareum* by Julius Caesar); IX 9, 82–90 (= the building of the Pharos by Cleopatra); XII 21, 96–14 (= the construction of a public bath by Septimius Severus); XII 41, 32–49 (the construction of a monument to the horse of Diocletian after the rebellion against the emperor). These passages alternate interesting information (see, for instance, the reference of *Chron.* VIII 1, 4 to the original name of Alexandria, Ῥακοῦστις: Malalas is the only Greek source mentioning it) with erroneous interpretations (like the attribution of the building of Pharos to Cleopatra in IX 9, 89).

Fragmenta

Πάτρια Ἀλεξανδρείας τῆς μεγάλης

1

John Malalas, *Chron.* IX 10, 39–41

Οἱ δὲ ἐκθέμενοι τὰ πάτρια Ἀλεξανδρείας τῆς μεγάλης τὴν Κλεοπάτραν ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ εἶπαν λειφθεῖσαν, καὶ ἄλλα δέ τινα μὴ συμφωνοῦντα τοῖς Ῥωμαίων συγγραφεῦσιν.

1. ἐκθέμενοι : EI | εἰσθέμενοι O || πάτρια: cum Dindorf | πατρία O || 2. λειφθεῖσαν : cum Chilmead | ληφθεῖσαν OEISl

However, those who expounded the *patria* of the great Alexandria said that Cleopatra was left in Egypt; they add other things that do not agree with the Roman historians.

Commentary

F 1

Source date: sixth century AD.

οἱ δὲ ἐκθέμενοι: the adversative δέ reveals the following sentence to be in opposition to the preceding one. Later on, the presence of the particle is useful to determine the reading (and the significance) of the passage (see below). The Slavonic Malalas translates the substantive participle as Съписавшіи, linking the verb ἐκτίθημι to the Slavonic съписатьи (“to write”).¹⁵⁵ That corresponds to one of the possible meanings of the Greek original. The same choice has been made by the translation of Jeffreys, Jeffreys, and Scott (“those who have written”).¹⁵⁶

τὰ πάτρια Ἀλεξανδρείας τῆς μεγάλης: as already said, the meaning of the neuter πάτρια is ambiguous. It is not clear whether it refers to the late antique *Patria of Alexandria* or not. Malalas uses it in just one other passage of his *Chronicle*. While describing the embassy of the patriarch of Antioch Zacharias to the emperor Justinian, the chronicler writes that the ambassador received χρυσοῦ κεντηνάρια λ’ καὶ τύπους περὶ διαφόρων κεφαλαίων τοῦ ἄγεσθαι ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ πόλει τὰ πάτρια (“thirty *centenaria* of gold and decrees on a variety of subjects to maintain the ancestral customs in that city”).¹⁵⁷ In this case, the word πάτρια is clearly a reference to the traditions of Antioch, which needed imperial support to survive the last earthquake. This use can clarify the meaning of our fragment too, but not necessarily. As already seen, the participle ἐκθέμενοι does not help either. The Slavonic Malalas translates the original τὰ πάτρια Ἀλεξανδρείας as ωѣства и Александрїи. The construction is quite curious. ωѣства (in normal orthography отъчѣства) is the plural neuter of отъчѣство, “fatherhood, kinship, lineage, family, homeland, fatherland”. The dative Александрїи

¹⁵⁵ Critical text of Istrin 1912, 14. For further information about the Slavonic Malalas, see Franklin 1990, 276–286.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. Jeffreys–Jeffreys–Scott 1986, 116.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. *Chron.* XVII 22, 76–78. Translation of Jeffreys–Jeffreys–Scott 1986, 244.

corresponds to the genitive Ἀλεξανδρείας. The translation ωѣѣства Александрїи would be a simple calque of the Greek original, were it not for the conjunction и (“and, also, too”) between the two words. Such an insertion is problematic: it may be a later addition to the original translation. It could denote the misunderstanding of a scribe, who did not comprehend the use and the meaning of the plural ωѣѣства and tried to correct it. Whatever the reason for this, it is clear that the Slavonic translation does not help in understanding the fragment. Indeed, it is not possible to verify how the Slavonic version translates the second πάτρια: the passage from the seventeenth book is summarized by the translator, who remembers the gifts of Justinian, but does not make any reference to the traditions of Antioch.¹⁵⁸

τὴν Κλεοπάτραν: Cleopatra VII Thea Philopator, the last queen of Egypt, who ruled on the two kingdoms between 51 and 30 BC.¹⁵⁹ The tenth paragraph of Malalas’ ninth book is dedicated to her relationship with Marc Antony and to the consequent war against Octavian. The last section in particular describes the fate of her body. Malalas quotes the writing of the historian Theophilus: as already stated in the introduction, the identity of this source is not completely clear. As Jeffreys noted in her study on Malalas’ sources, the σοφὸς χρονογράφος (“learned historian”) is often quoted by the chronicler.¹⁶⁰ In the prologue of his work, Malalas mentions him as one of the main sources of the chronicle, along with Africanus, Eusebius, Pausanias, Didymus, Clemens, Diodorus, Domninus and Eustathius.¹⁶¹ The scholars have traditionally identified him as the sixth bishop of Antioch, who wrote three treatises to Autolycus and tried to reconcile pagan and Christian chronologies. He shared with Malalas the Antiochean origins and was an author of the first importance for later Christian culture. However, the chronologies by this namesake do not correspond to those listed by

¹⁵⁸ Cf. Istrin 1914, 25. See also Jeffreys–Jeffreys–Scott 1986, *loc. cit.*

¹⁵⁹ Summarizing the bibliography concerning Cleopatra is impossible. For a general introduction and further bibliographic references, see Ameling 2002, 444–445. For an exposition of Cleopatra’s last days, see Ashton 2008, 169–189.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. 1990, 194.

¹⁶¹ Cf. *Chron. Proem.* 6.

Malalas.¹⁶² Moreover, the note about Cleopatra's corpse is not present in the *corpus* of the bishop. Indeed, the dispatch of Cleopatra's body to Rome does not find any other attestation in ancient literature.¹⁶³ Another possible candidate to be the "learned historian" is the fourth-century bishop of Alexandria, who wrote an Easter table and dedicated it to the emperor Theodosius the Great.¹⁶⁴ Given his Alexandrian provenance, he could be a plausible option. But referring the quotes of Malalas to an Easter table is not convincing. A quick examination shows that the nature of Theophilus' work was more complex than a simple list of Easter dates. As Malalas notes, his source presented the history of Io,¹⁶⁵ listed the ancient rulers of Egypt¹⁶⁶ and mentioned the deeds of Heracles.¹⁶⁷ In all probability, his work was more extensive. Such a consideration allows us to introduce the proposal of Van Nuffelen,¹⁶⁸ who presents Theophilus as a locally focused Egyptian chronicler, "willing to integrate local interest, Greek philosophy and chronography" (2016, 265). His work got lost along with the greater part of late antique local histories and the testimony of Malalas is what endures of his activity. In my opinion, this remains the most convincing hypothesis. Another possibility is named by Gambetti, who mentions the agent of Marc Anthony in Corinth.¹⁶⁹ The identification of Malalas' source as this agent is difficult to sustain. First of all, as Gambetti herself highlights, he "is otherwise unknown as a writer" (BNJ 630a, F1). Secondly, if we identify the Theophilus of this fragment as the namesake quoted in other passages of the *Chronographia*, we must hypothesize that an author of the first century BC wrote a chronicle starting with Adam¹⁷⁰ and dating the crucifixion of Christ.¹⁷¹

¹⁶² Note: the presence of an intermediary source between him and Malalas could explain the different chronologies of the *Chronographia* and the *Ad Autolyicum* (cf. Jeffreys 1990, 194).

¹⁶³ Cf. BNJ 630a, F1.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. Jeffreys 1990, 30.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. *Chron.* II 6, 8–9.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. *Chron.* III 7, 45–47.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. *Chron.* I 14, 25–26.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. 2016, 262–266.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. BNJ 630a, F1.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. *Chron.* VIII 4, 69–70.

¹⁷¹ Cf. *Chron.* X 2, 37–38.

ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ εἶπαν λειφθεῖσαν: the reading of the manuscripts is ληφθεῖσαν, the feminine aorist passive participle of λαμβάνω (“to take”). The sentence should be translated as “she was captured/taken in Egypt”. The same reading is provided by the Slavonic version.¹⁷² In my edition, I apply the emendation proposed by Chilmead in the *editio princeps* of the *Chronographia*: λειφθεῖσαν, the feminine aorist passive participle of λείπω. The translation of the passage would therefore be “she was left in Egypt”. As already stated, the quote of the *πάτρια* of Alexandria is introduced by an adversative δέ (see above). The particle creates an opposition between the opening quote and the preceding one. The reading of Chilmead actualizes this opposition: Theophilus wrote that the body of Cleopatra was transported to Rome (ἀπηνέχθη [...] ἐν τῇ Ῥώμῃ); the authors of *πάτρια*, *on the contrary*, said that it was left in Egypt (ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ [...] λειφθεῖσαν). The binomial “was sent to Rome” / “was captured in Egypt” seems less convincing.

καὶ ἄλλα δέ τινα μὴ συμφωνοῦντα τοῖς Ῥωμαίων συγγραφεῦσιν: the discordance between the local histories and the Roman traditions supposedly involved other aspects of Cleopatra’s story. The fate of the corpse, as it is presented by the antiquarian sources of the *Chronographia*, echoes the earlier sources describing the death of the queen: Plutarch,¹⁷³ Suetonius,¹⁷⁴ and Cassius Dio¹⁷⁵ report that Cleopatra was buried with Anthony in the mausoleum she had prepared for them.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷² Cf. Jeffreys 1986, 116.

¹⁷³ Cf. *Ant.* 86, 4.

¹⁷⁴ Cf. *Aug.* 17.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. 51, 15.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. Ashton 2008, 169–178.

2.

ANONYMOUS *PATRIA OF BYZANTIUM*

Introduction

In his entry on the Bosphorus, Stephanus of Byzantium writes that one of the ports of his city is named Βοσπόριον, adding that his fellow citizens used to call it Φωσφόριον. The grammarian attributes the different form to a simple change of letters, but also takes note of a different possibility. Centuries before, the Macedonian king Philip II had besieged Byzantium, and one of his attacks had been repelled thanks to the intervention of the goddess Hecate. As a sign of gratitude, the Byzantines had chosen one of her titles – the “enlightening” (φωσφόρος) – to name the port of their city (cf. **F2**). The epitome of the *Ethnica* does not provide any information about the origin of the legend; it just presents it as an alternative explanation for a peculiar phonetic variant. Some help is provided by a chapter of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus’ *On Themes*: while introducing the twelfth district of the Byzantine Empire, that of Chersonesus, the text quotes the entry of Stephanus, reporting some of the material deleted by the epitomist. Among this material, there is also the source of Hecate’s legend: οἱ τὰ πάτρια συγγεγραφότες τοῦ Βυζαντίου, “those who have written the *patria* of Byzantium” (cf. **F1**).

The quote of Stephanus alludes to a group of authors focusing on Byzantine antiquities, but does not provide any name. That is the reason why neither Müller, nor Jacoby inserted the reference into their editions. Such an omission is disputable, though. The passage – it is true – does not provide much information, but it says something at least: that Stephanus of Byzantium had more than a single *patria* of his city at his disposal, and that these works celebrated the divine protection of the city against foreign conquerors. If the tale of Hecate is the product of these compositions, one should attribute a late dating to it: and indeed, the story is reported only by late sources, namely in Hesychius’ *Patria of Constantinople* and Stephanus himself (cf. **F2**). Among the unnamed sources of Stephanus, one could place also Christodorus of Coptus, the

author of the only *Patria of Constantinople* we know of (cf. **n. 6**). Unfortunately, there is no basis to affirm it: the work of Christodorus has not survived, and it is not possible to say whether the episode of the Macedonian siege was included in it. We do not know either if the *patria* mentioned by Stephanus were dedicated to Byzantium, or if they celebrated the imperial glory of Constantinople. In the former case, these texts should be dated up to the early fourth century AD; in the latter, nothing would impede a later date (cf. **F2**).

Fragmenta

Πάτρια τοῦ Βυζαντίου

1

Const. Porph. *De Them.* II 12, 30–33

οἱ δὲ ἐγχώριοι Φωσφόριον αὐτὸ καλοῦσι παραγραμματίζοντες, ὅθεν οἱ τὰ πάτρια συγγεγραφότες τοῦ Βυζαντίου ἄλλην ἐπιτιθέασι μυθικὴν ἱστορίαν· ὅτι Φιλίππου τοῦ Μακεδόνης τὸ Βυζάντιον πολιορκοῦντος ***

3. πολιορκοῦντος : cum van Meurs | πολυορκοῦντος C

But local people change the letters, and call it *Phosphorion*: because of that, those who wrote the *Patria of Byzantium* have proposed a different mythical tale, namely that Philip of Macedonia, while sieging Byzantium

2

Steph. Byz. s.v. Βόσπορος (β 130, 10–15 Billerbeck)

οἱ δὲ ἐγχώριοι Φωσφόριον αὐτὸ καλοῦσι παραγραμματίζοντες· ἢ ὅτι Φιλίππου τοῦ Μακεδόνης διορύξαντος κατὰ τὴν πολιορκίαν εἴσοδον κρυπτὴν, ὅθεν ἀφανῶς οἱ ὀρύττοντες ἤμελλον τοῦ ὀρύγματος ἀναδῦναι, ἢ Ἐκάτη φωσφόρος οὖσα δᾶδας ἐποίησε νύκτωρ τοῖς πολίταις φανῆναι, καὶ τὴν πολιορκίαν φυγόντες Φωσφόριον τὸν τόπον ὠνόμασαν.

1. παραγραμματίζοντες· ἢ ὅτι : codd. | π., ὅθεν οἱ τὰ πάτρια συγγεγραφότες τοῦ Βυζαντίου ἄλλην ἐπιτιθέασι μυθικὴν ἱστορίαν ὁ. Meineke (ex Constantini Porphyrogeniti *De Thematibus* II 12) || 3. ἀφανῶς : RPN | ἀναφανῶς Q || ἤμελλον : QPN | ἔμελλον R || 4. ἢ Ἐκάτη : cum van Berkel (ex Eustathii Thessalonicensis *Commentariis in Dionysium Periegetam* 142) | καὶ Ἐκάτη codd. || δᾶδας : Q | δάδας RPN

Bosporion is also the name of the port of Byzantium, but local people change the letters, and call it *Phosphorion*. Otherwise, <there is another explanation:> while sieging the city, Philip of Macedonia had a secret

passage dug. Those who excavated it sought to emerge from there without being seen, but the enlightening Hecate made torches appear to the citizens in the night. Since they had avoided the fall of the city, they called the place *Phosphorion*.

Commentary

F 1

Source date: tenth – eleventh century AD.

οἱ δὲ ἐγγώριοι Φωσφόριον αὐτὸ καλοῦσι παραγραμματίζοντες:
the fragment comes from the second book of Constantine's *On Themes*. It is reported only by a manuscript, the *Parisinus Graecus* 854 (XIII c.), and concerns the European themes. The connection between this book and the preceding one is an object of discussion: in his edition, Pertusi arrived at the conclusion that the second part must be attributed to a different author, who wanted to extend the work of Constantine.¹⁷⁷ Whether the Macedonian emperor participated or not in the redaction of the second book is not important for the present analysis; what matters here is the use of sources made by the redactor, whoever he was. Indeed, it is clear that he had at his disposal the enormous amount of texts collected by Constantine VII – even if he was not the emperor.¹⁷⁸ The fragment comes from the chapter on the twelfth theme, that of Chersonesus. It concludes what survives of the second book, and is not complete (see below). The district of Chersonesus was placed on the coast of Crimea, and was an important trade and travel hub.¹⁷⁹ After a brief introduction to it, the text extensively quotes an entry of Stephanus of Byzantium, i.e. that on Βόσπορος.¹⁸⁰ If we compare the text of the quote with the epitome of the *Ethnica*, we can see that the former is more extensive than the latter: it clearly had a more complete text to reference, maybe the original. A list of the sources of the entry demonstrates this. While the epitome names only Philo¹⁸¹ and Aeschylus,¹⁸² the Constantinian text adds also Strabo,¹⁸³ Phlegon,¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁷ Cf. 1952, 31–49.

¹⁷⁸ Cf. Pertusi 1952, 47–49.

¹⁷⁹ Cf. Pertusi 1952, 182–183.

¹⁸⁰ About the quotes of Stephanus in Constantine's work, see Pertusi 1952, 34–37.

¹⁸¹ Cf. *FGrHist* 790, F31.

¹⁸² Cf. *Prom.* 732–734.

¹⁸³ Cf. XI 2, 10.

Favorinus,¹⁸⁵ an epigram of the *Greek Anthology*,¹⁸⁶ and the anonymous authors of the *patria* of Byzantium.¹⁸⁷ Part of the information attributed to these authors has been removed in the epitome; other elements have been reported without naming their sources. *Rebus sic stantibus*, the Constantinian version provides a better base on which to reconstruct Stephanus' original. After providing the different forms of the name Βόσπορος (along with its derivatives), the grammarian noted that one of the ports of Byzantium used to be named Βοσπόριον, and cited Favorinus and the Palatine epigram as witnesses. Then, he noted the local variant Φοσφόριον, attributing it to a change of letters (οἱ δὲ ἐγχώριοι [...] παραγραμματίζοντες). This interpretation is far from impossible: the passage from the voiceless bilabial stop <p> to the aspirated <ph> is not difficult to explain. If the Constantinian text does not omit anything, the fragment of the *patria* came immediately after the poem of the *Anthology*.

ὅθεν οἱ τὰ πάτρια συγγεγραφότες τοῦ Βυζαντίου ἄλλην ἐπιτιθέασι μυθικὴν ἱστορίαν: the passage does not provide any name, but vaguely attributes the fragment to οἱ τὰ πάτρια συγγεγραφότες, “those who wrote the *Patria of Byzantium*”. The plural participle reveals that Stephanus had more than one source at his disposal. It is possible that his note does not refer to specific *patria*-works, but – more generally – to scattered information concerning the traditions of Byzantium. An observation must be made, though. Stephanus uses the verb συγγράφω, “to write, to compose a writing”,¹⁸⁸ which normally refers to literary works: see, for instance, the reference to Polybius' *History*,¹⁸⁹ or to the *Persian History* of Pharnuchus.¹⁹⁰ These parallels

¹⁸⁴ Cf. *FGrHist* 257, F17.

¹⁸⁵ Cf. F 87 Barigazzi.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. VII 169.

¹⁸⁷ The Constantinian text does not report Stephanus' quote of Philo: it is likely that the name has gone lost in the tradition. After the tale of Hecate, the epitome quotes also a line of Sophocles' *Phineus* (F 107 Radt). The incomplete transmission of the Constantinian text does not allow to verify how it continued after the siege of Byzantium.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. *LSJ*, 1661.

¹⁸⁹ Cf. *Ethn.* s.v. Μεγάλη Πόλις (μ 105 Billerbeck): καὶ Πολύβιος τεσσαράκοντα βιβλία συγγράψας («and Polybius, who wrote forty books»).

make the quote of specific literary compositions reliable. In his entry on the Goths, Stephanus writes: ὕστερον δὲ εἰς τὴν ἐκτὸς Θράκην μετανέστησαν, ὡς εἴρηται μοι ἐν τοῖς Βυζαντιακοῖς, “then, they migrated to Thrace, as I have said in the *History of Byzantium*”.¹⁹¹ One could suspect that this work is the source of the fragment on Hecate.¹⁹² There is a problem, though: if Stephanus explicitly mentions his own work while presenting the Goths, why does he not do the same in the entry on the Bosphorus? Instead of the vague reference to the *patria* of his city, he could have inserted another clear quote of his text. Since he does not do that, we can suppose he is referring to other sources. In spite of the lacuna interrupting it (see below), the passage is of great interest for two reasons. First, the form of the title. When Stephanus wrote the *Ethnica*, the old Byzantium had already changed names and identity: yet, the grammarian quoted τὰ πάτρια [...] τοῦ Βυζαντίου, not those of Constantinople. Such a form could suggest the use of sources earlier than 330 AD. It must be said, though, that the examination of Stephanus’ work unveils a more complex situation. The scholar used the form Κωνσταντινούπολις only in two passages of his text: in the entry on Byzantium, where he noted that the city μετωνομάσθη δὲ καὶ Κωνσταντινούπολις καὶ νέα Ῥώμη (“was latterly named also Constantinople and New Rome”),¹⁹³ and in that concerning the city of Constantine. There he briefly highlights the composite nature of the name (δύο μέρη λόγου, καὶ ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐν Κωνσταντινοπολίτης, “the word has two parts; the single word *Constantinopolites* comes from them”), and refers to the entry περὶ Βυζαντίου, “on Byzantium”.¹⁹⁴ Except for

¹⁹⁰ Cf. *Ethn.* s.v. Ἀντιόχεια (α 334 Billerbeck): καὶ Φαρνούχος ὁ Περσικὰς ἱστορίας συγγεγραφὼς («and Pharnuchus, who wrote *Persian Histories*»).

¹⁹¹ Cf. *Ethn.* s.v. Γότθοι (γ 104 Billerbeck).

¹⁹² The nature of Stephanus’ work is object of discussion: the passage is the only text referring to it. The absence of other mentions made Meineke think that the grammarian just made reference to his entry on Byzantium (1849, 212). Such an interpretation has been rightly rejected by Billerbeck (2006, 435 n. 97). Indeed, Stephanus refers to the entry on his city in another passage of his *Ethnica* (s.v. Κωνσταντινούπολις, κ 317 Billerbeck) and mentions it in a different way (ὡς εἴρηται ἐν τῷ περὶ Βυζαντίου). In conclusion, the grammarian refers to another literary work.

¹⁹³ Cf. *Ethn.* s.v. Βυζάντιον (β 190 Billerbeck).

¹⁹⁴ Cf. *Ethn.* s.v. Κωνσταντινούπολις (κ 317 Billerbeck).

these two cases, Stephanus always uses the older name of his homeland, even if he has to write something involving the contemporary imperial capital.¹⁹⁵ Because of this tendency, it is not possible to determine if the sources of the passage were about Byzantium, or if they concerned Constantinople instead. The presence of more than a single *patria* could support the latter hypothesis: the central role of the Second Rome would explain it better than the relatively marginal position of Byzantium. In this case, one should suppose that Stephanus adapted the titles of his sources (Πάτρια Κωνσταντινουπόλεως?) to his own stylistic use. But it is also possible that he used *patria* of both Byzantium and Constantinople, and called all of them τὰ πάτρια τοῦ Βυζαντίου. The text does not provide enough elements to solve the problem. Along with the reference to the *patria* of Byzantium, the fragment presents a second element of interest. As it is possible to read, it says that the authors of *patria* stated ἄλλην [...] μυθικὴν ἱστορίαν, “another mythical tale”, on the base of the name of the port. The epitome of the *Ethnica* reports the text in a briefer way, and partially alters its meaning (cf. **F2**). Such a passage is useful in order to reconstruct how the authors of *patria* used to work while designing their works. They started from a local phonetic variant (Φωσφόριον vs the official name Βώσποριον) to construct their narrative; in order to enrich it, they used the material provided by local cults and traditions (such as the Byzantine veneration for Hecate: cf. **F2**). As a result, they obtained a narration celebrating Byzantium and its divine protection.

ὅτι Φιλίππου τοῦ Μακεδόνης τὸ Βυζάντιον πολιορκοῦντος *:**

after introducing the siege of Byzantium by Philip II, the text is interrupted. The manuscript does not go further: as Pertusi noted, it is plausible that the archetype of it was equally incomplete.¹⁹⁶ Thanks to the epitome of the *Ethnica*, it is possible to determine how the text of Stephanus continued (in broad terms at least: cf. **F2**).

¹⁹⁵ See, for instance, the entries on the port of Athyra (s.v. Ἀθύρας, α 84 Billerbeck), the district of Phileas (s.v. Φιλέας, φ 67 Billerbeck), and the city of Chalcedon (s.v. Χαλκηδών, χ 15 Billerbeck).

¹⁹⁶ Cf. 1952, 183.

Source date: sixth century AD.

οἱ δὲ ἐγγώριοι Φωσφόριον αὐτὸ καλοῦσι παραγραμματίζοντες: in spite of the elimination of many sources, the text of the epitome follows the presentation of Stephanus' original. It presents the name of the city, listing its variants and derivatives. Then, it mentions homonymous places, arriving at the port of Byzantium. At this point, it reports the same text of the Constantinian version, noting the local variant of the port's name, and explaining it through a change of letters.

ἢ ὅτι: this part of the text reveals how much the summarizing of the epitome has altered the meaning of the original text. As already stated, Stephanus wrote that the authors of the *patria* designed the tale of Philip *on the base of* the local phonetic variant (ὄθεν: cf. **F1**). The epitomist presents the myth of Hecate as an alternative explanation instead. In his words, the form Φωσφόριον can be explained as a consequence of a phonetic change, *or* as the result of a local myth. The inelegant juxtaposition of the participle παραγραμματίζοντες with the reason clause introduced by ὅτι confirms the inaccurate rendition of the entry.

Φιλίππου τοῦ Μακεδόνης διορύξαντος κατὰ τὴν πολιορκίαν εἰσοδὸν κρυπτὴν ὄθεν ἀφανῶς οἱ ὀρύττοντες ἡμέλλον τοῦ ὀρύγματος ἀναδῦναι: Philip II besieged Byzantium between 340 and 339 BC. He needed control of the city to secure his lines of communication into Asia, and wanted to weaken the dangerous influence of Athens over the area (Byzantium was one of its allies).¹⁹⁷ The episode of the siege is touched upon by many authors,¹⁹⁸ but – along with Stephanus – the miraculous salvation of Byzantium is narrated only by one other source, namely Hesychius' *Patria of Constantinople*.¹⁹⁹ After

¹⁹⁷ Cf. Ashley 1998, 142–144.

¹⁹⁸ E.g. Diod. XVI 77; Dion. Hal. *Ad Amm.* 11; Plut. *Mor.* 848E; Porph. *Chr.* F1, 1, 81–83 Müller.

¹⁹⁹ Cf. 25–27. About Hesychius, see the general *Introduction*, § 4.

introducing Philip's decision to besiege Byzantium, the text describes the attack: the night is moonless and rainy (νυκτὸς [...] ἀσελήνου καὶ ὄμβρου καταρραγέντος ἑξαισίου), and the Macedonian army attacks the walls with its powerful military devices (διώρυξί τε καὶ παντοίοις πολεμικοῖς μηχανήμασι τοῖς τείχεσι προσπελάζων). Thanks to the barking of dogs and to bright clouds of fire coming from the north (τοὺς κατὰ τὴν πόλιν κύνας πρὸς ὕλακὴν [...] καὶ νεφέλας πυρὸς τοῖς ἀρκτώοις [...] μέρεσιν), the citizens wake up and beat the enemies back. They name the wall of Byzantium *Tymbosyne*, and set up a torch-bearing statue of Hecate (Τυμβοσύνην τὸ τεῖχος ἐκάλεσαν λαμπαδηφόρον Ἑκάτης ἀναστήσαντες ἄγαλμα). The similarities between the narration of Hesychius and that of Stephanus reveal that the two texts were inspired by the same tradition. Both versions present a nightly attack, repelled thanks to a divine miracle (the torches of Hecate on the one hand; the light of the clouds and the barking of dogs in the other). Both of them involve the goddess Hecate. However, there are some differences as well: while – according to Stephanus – the Macedonian army tried to penetrate Byzantium through a secret tunnel, Hesychius describes it attacking the city in a more direct way. The assault leads to different manifestations of the deity: Stephanus presents a real epiphany, while the chapter of Hesychius just speaks of suggestive natural phenomena. Most importantly, the latter does not accredit the barking of dogs and the fiery clouds to Hecate, who only appears at the end of the tale as a simple statue, but to a generic τις [...] τοῦ θεοῦ [...] συμμαχία (“divine help”). This point is fundamental in determining the relationship between the two versions. One can reasonably suppose that the source of Hesychius gave more space to Hecate than its Byzantine follower: the barking of the dogs and the dedication of the statue at the end of the story (which remains without explanation) suggest it.²⁰⁰ The strong reduction of Hecate's importance can be explained through a Christian re-interpretation of the story, which gave a “rational” representation of the miracle, and substituted

²⁰⁰ Dogs are strictly associated to Hecate and her cults: cf. Eur. *TGF*, F 968; Aristoph. *PCG*, F 608; *Schol. Aristoph. Pax* 276. They appeared in many of her representations and their baying was one of the signs of her presence: cf. Theoc. II 12–13; 35–36; Verg. *Aen.* VI 255–258. For a proper analysis, with references to further literature, see Johnston 1990.

for the goddess a less traumatic (and more generic) deity. The two texts may well have been inspired by the same tradition. In the case of Stephanus, this tradition was filtrated (or codified) by late antique *patria* of Byzantium/Constantinople. For Hesychius, the situation is more complicated. It is not possible to determine the texts he used to write his work: he could have taken inspiration from late antique *patria*, like Stephanus, but nothing guarantees it. Moreover, the Christianization of the story could be equally attributed either to his hand, or to that/those of his source(s).²⁰¹ In his edition of the *Ethnica*, Meineke tried to put the summarized version of the epitome together with the Constantinian text.²⁰² From a philological viewpoint, this operation is quite risky. As a comparison between the two versions shows, the epitome did not just eliminate sections of the original text: it partially reformulated it. An example of that is provided by the presentation of Philip: the epitome compresses into a single genitive absolute the siege of Byzantium and the excavation of the secret passage (Φιλίππου τοῦ Μακεδόνοϛ διορύξαντοϛ κατὰ τὴν πολιορκίαν εἴσοδον κρυπτήν). In spite of the lacuna interrupting it (cf. **F1**), one can see that the Constantinian text has a different formulation: the genitive absolute just refers to the Macedonian siege (Φιλίππου τοῦ Μακεδόνοϛ τὸ Βυζάντιον πολιορκοῦντοϛ); the digging of the tunnel was expressed by a different proposition (in all probability, by the main clause of the period).

ἡ Ἐκάτη φωσφόρος οὖσα δᾶδας ἐποίησε νύκτωρ τοῖς πολίταις φανῆναι: Hecate is presented in line with her traditional representations: she is enlightening (φωσφόρος) and carries torches (δᾶδας).²⁰³ The cult of the goddess was particularly strong in Byzantium, where she was considered the most important deity of protection: since she was associated with crossroads, walls, and borders, her sanctuaries were placed close to the gate of the city.²⁰⁴ Interestingly enough, her

²⁰¹ The second option is more likely, if one follows Kaldellis and take Hesychius as a pagan author: cf. Kaldellis 2005; *contra* Cameron 2016, 265–273.

²⁰² Cf. 1849, 177–178.

²⁰³ Cf. Edwards 1986.

²⁰⁴ Cf. Limberis 1994, 126–127. Further information about Hecate as a «liminal goddess» in MacLachlan–Fletcher 2007, 14.

cults were of Thracian origin, like the mythical founder of Byzantium, i.e. the king Bizas.²⁰⁵

καὶ τὴν πολιορκίαν φυγόντες Φωσφόριον τὸν τόπον ὠνόμασαν:
Stephanus makes reference to the *Prospchorion* harbour, which was situated on the southern shore of the Golden Horn, next to the Byzantine Gate of Eugenius.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁵ About the founder of Byzantium there are many different legends: the one presenting him as a Thracian hero is just one of them. See the synthesis of Miller 1899, 1158–1159.

²⁰⁶ Cf. Janin 1964, 235; Müller–Wiener 1977, 57.

3.

ANONYMOUS PATRIA OF ANTINOPOLIS (*P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352; *MP*³ 1972, 91; *LDAB* 5407)

Introduction

Discovered – along with thousands of other manuscripts – at the ancient rubbish dump of Oxyrhynchus (the modern *el-Bahnasa*), *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352 consists of five papyrus scraps, written only on the *recto*. They preserve the remainders of a hexametric poem describing the last deeds of Antinous, the favourite of the emperor Hadrian. Drowned in the Nile between September and October 130 AD, he was deified by the ruler, who founded the city of Antinopolis (modern *Sheikh 'Ibada*) in his honour.²⁰⁷

The first four fragments of the composition are difficult to interpret. The papyrus scraps are particularly ruined and only a few words are readable. They likely described the last chase of Hadrian and Antinous, which took place in Libya at the beginning of September 130. As Athenaeus witnesses, the emperor and his favourite hunted a great lion, which had been causing problems for the people; during the hunt, Hadrian saved the life of his lover and killed the beast.²⁰⁸ Soon after the death of Antinous, the episode was celebrated by an epyllion of Pancrates of Alexandria: evoking the deeds of Hadrian and the ferociousness of the lion, the poet noted that a new flower – the rosy lotus – had germinated from the blood of the slain beast.²⁰⁹ The poem of *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352 seems to follow the scheme inaugurated by Pancrates: the discovery of the flower, enigmatically presented as ζωάγριον

²⁰⁷ The bibliography on Antinous is too ample to be efficaciously summarized here: for a proper introduction to the youth and his myth, see the studies of Lambert (1984), Meyer (1991), and Grenier (2008). For a detailed presentation of Antinopolis, see Zahrnt 1972.

²⁰⁸ Cf. *Deipn.* XV 21.

²⁰⁹ Further notes about Pancrates and his poem in the commentary to **F2**, v. 4. For what concerns the rosy lotus, cf. **F6**, v. 1.

Ἀντιν[όοιο] (“the ransom of Antinous”: cf. **F6**, v. 1), concludes the narration of the hunt.

If compared to the preceding ones, the situation of the last fragment is less dramatic: the papyrus scrap is of larger size than the others and contains two columns of text (**FF 5–6**). The bad conservation of the former does not allow to read more than isolated words, but the latter column is almost intact. It contains thirty-nine hexameters. After a praise of the rosy lotus, they narrate Antinous’ catasterism: the goddess Selene – who has already made her appearance in **F3**, v. 5 – kidnaps the youth from the Nile and takes him as her husband (cf. **F6**, vv. 1–13). The foundation of Antinopolis, celebrated by lines 14–17, serves as Hadrian’s wedding gift to his former lover. A *paragraphos* follows line 17. The ensuing twenty-two verses address a completely different topic: they narrate Capitoline Zeus having mercy upon men and sending the emperor Diocletian to rule them. According to the poet, the advent of the ruler inaugurates a new golden age for the whole world. After naming the Egyptian prefect Diogenes (cf. v. 27) and an anonymous ἐπιστράτηγος of the Heptanomia (cf. vv. 32–33), he appeals to an undetermined god to be crowned with his Olympian olive (cf. vv. 36–39). At this point, the text stops. There is no concluding sign.

In the *editio princeps* of the papyrus, Rea dated it to ca. 285 AD by the references to Diocletian (who was proclaimed emperor on November 284) and Diogenes (*Praefectus Aegypti* until 286).²¹⁰ According to the scholar, the verses on the emperor constituted “a tailpiece to the lines about Antinous above them” (1996, 1). An anonymous author likely wrote them for a poetic competition, either at the Egyptian Capitoline Games (held in Antinopolis and Oxyrhynchus), or at the Μεγάλα Ἀντινόεια of Antinopolis.²¹¹ In his commentary on the text, Rea pointed out that some textual choices of the papyrus seemed to anticipate Nonnus’ poetry.²¹² The same remark was made by Magnelli, who provided three possible solutions to explain the affinity: a simple coincidence, the shared dependence on (lost) literary sources, or the direct knowledge of the papyrus by Nonnus. While highlighting the

²¹⁰ Cf. 1996, 1.

²¹¹ Cf. Rea 1996, 1–2.

²¹² Cf. 1996, 12–17.

reliability of the second possibility, Magnelli suggested to not exclude the third.²¹³

The Nonnian atmosphere and the good quality of the versification are the bases of Livrea's interpretation: he dedicated two articles to *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352, and attributed it to Soterichus of Oasis (cf. **n. 11**).²¹⁴ The Egyptian poet lived under the reign of Diocletian (284–305 AD) and wrote a composite series of works including an *Encomium* to the emperor.²¹⁵ In his 1999 study, Livrea highlighted the connection between the production of Soterichus and that of Nonnus, noting that the link makes Soterichus' production of *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352 highly plausible.²¹⁶ According to the scholar, either all lines come from Soterichus' *Encomium of Diocletian*, or just those following the *paragraphos*; in this case, the hexameters concerning Antinous should be referred to another work, maybe to a poem about Hadrian's lover, written on the occasion of the Μεγάλα Ἀντινόεια.²¹⁷ Three years after his first article on the topic, Livrea returned to the papyrus and provided a new wider interpretation. He linked *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352 to other two papyrus fragments, namely *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 480 (an epic fragment on Diocletian's Persian campaign) and *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 (the so-called *Cosmogony of Strasbourg*). He suggested considering the three texts as parts of the same work, i.e. a "poema epico-storico attribuito a Soterico di Oasi" (2002, 17). The reference to the Persian campaign (297 AD) does not fit the dating of Rea: therefore, Livrea suggested to push back the writing of the poem to the end of the third century AD.²¹⁸ Since the *Cosmogony of Strasbourg* is the object of another entry, I shall deal with Livrea's hypothesis there (cf. **n. 4**). For now, I will just anticipate the conclusion of my examination: the three papyri do not belong to the same composition. *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352 has to be read alone.

²¹³ Cf. 1998.

²¹⁴ Cf. Livrea 1999, 2002. Both articles have been reprinted in Zumbo 2016 (311–317 and 319–336 respectively).

²¹⁵ Cf. **n. 11, T1**.

²¹⁶ Cf. 1999, 69–70.

²¹⁷ Cf. 1999, 71–72.

²¹⁸ Cf. 2002, 21.

The poem was studied also by Agosti, who pointed out the influence of the imperial rhetorical tradition on its composition: in particular, the scholar highlighted the formal similarities between the celebration of Diocletian and the στεφανοτικός λόγος (“speech on the crown”) as theorized by Menander the Rhetor.²¹⁹ In the same year, Gigli Piccardi provided a different analysis of the text, studying its Egyptian and mystical background.²²⁰ In spite of the different approaches, both studies agree that Livrea’s dating is a plausible option.²²¹ In 2008, Grenier returned to the papyrus and used it as a tool to investigate the reasons for and consequences of Antinous’ death.²²²

In order to understand the structure and the meaning of *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352, one has to determine the role of the *paragraphos* dividing its last fragment. Does it separate two sections of the same poem, or two different compositions? The first editor of the papyrus opted for the former hypothesis,²²³ and his example was followed by the majority of scholars.²²⁴ Janiszewski was the only one to hypothesize the presence of two poems:²²⁵ according to him, the interpretation of Rea is “at all not convincing”, because “the jump from the story of Antinous and the foundation of Antinopolis to the appraisal of the policy of Diocletian and his officials in Egypt seems too far for one text” (2006, 234). That is not necessarily true. The lines on Antinous and those on Diocletian are less distant than one could expect: as Gigli Piccardi noticed, the glorification of the emperor matches the celebration of Antinopolis.²²⁶ In separating the two halves of the papyrus one must face another difficulty. The column of text containing the poem(s) was four lines shorter than the preceding one: it supposedly reveals the end of the composition, even if no explicit end sign follows the verses on Diocletian.²²⁷ Taking the final invocation of **F6**, vv. 36–39 as the

²¹⁹ Cf. 2002, 52–54.

²²⁰ Cf. 2002, esp. 58–60.

²²¹ Cf. Agosti 2002, 56–58; Gigli Piccardi 2002, 59–60.

²²² Cf. 2008, 51–55.

²²³ Cf. Rea 1996, 1.

²²⁴ Cf. Agosti 2002, 51; Gigli Piccardi 2002; Livrea 2002.

²²⁵ Cf. Derda–Janiszewski 2002 (an encomium to Antinous and one to the anonymous epistrategos); 2006, 233–235.

²²⁶ Cf. 2002, 58.

²²⁷ Cf. Rea 1996, *loc. cit.*

conclusion of the text makes the hypothetical second poem only twenty-one verses long: as Rea remarked, those lines “hardly make a satisfactory poem alone” (1996, *loc. cit.*). Therefore, it is more likely that they constituted the finale of the preceding verses: in other words, that the *paragraphos* of line 17 separates two sections of the same work.²²⁸

The result of the analysis is a single poem moving from the last hunt of Antinous to the celebration of Diocletian, describing the death and catasterism of the former, and the foundation of Antinopolis. The mention of the Egyptian city provides a clue to determine the nature of the work: it can be identified as a *patria*-work on *Antinopolis*. The foundation of the city is the final episode of the narration and represents the peak of the poem. This important position is confirmed by the verses preceding the *paragraphos*. At line 14, the poet notes that Hadrian and the Nile offers two wedding presents to Selene and Antinous, i.e. a city and an island (δῶρον δ' Ἀδρια[ν]οῦ πόλι[ς], Νεῖλοι[ο] δὲ νῆ[σος], “a city was the gift of Antinous, an island that of the Nile”). If the identification of the latter gift is still debated, there is no doubt that the former is Antinopolis.²²⁹ After announcing the two offerings, the poet uses the following three verses to describe them more in detail. Had he followed the disposition of line 14 (first, the city; second, the island), he should have concluded the section with the celebration of the Nile's present. But his aim is different: he decides to invert the order of the elements, presenting the island before Hadrian's foundation. This change allows him to conclude his narrative with a celebration of Antinopolis. Thus, the city takes on a key role in the economy of the poem. This importance is confirmed by the different distribution of the lines: the praise of the island occupies a single verse (v. 15), that of Antinopolis two (vv. 16–

²²⁸ In his first article on *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352, Livrea too noticed that the text on Diocletian is too short to be complete: however, he did not consider it the continuation of the preceding lines, but the incipit of a new poem instead. In order to explain the different length of the two columns, he suggested that «le debolissime tracce di scrittura superstiti sulla colonna precedente quattro linee più sotto potrebbero appartenere ad una notazione marginale» (1999, 69). Given the loss of the first column, such a hypothesis cannot be demonstrated.

²²⁹ See the commentary to **F6**, v. 14.

17). The poem exalts the city for its Greek inheritance and places it at the center of a crown of ports.²³⁰

The themes approached by the poet reflect earlier traditions, some of them coming directly from the Antoninian age. We have already mentioned the epyllion of Pancrates, who celebrated Antinous immediately after his death and was rewarded by Hadrian with a place in the Museum of Alexandria. His poem became a model for the authors dealing with the subject and was followed also by our poet.²³¹ Like Pancrates, he does not insert any explicit reference to the death of Antinous, but jumps from the Nilotic bath of the youth (cf. v. 10) to his catasterism (cf. vv. 11–13). Even the connection between the lion hunt and the arrival to the Nile comes from Pancrates: the poet artistically compresses the distance between the desert near Alexandria (where Hadrian and Antinous killed the lion) and the middle course of the Nile (where Antinous drowned).²³² Other elements of the poem likely originated in the Antoninian age, but it is not possible to state whether they arrived at our poem through Pancrates' work, or through other mediums. The presence of Selene is such element.²³³ Grenier considered it a reflection of the lunar cults of the Hermopolitan region.²³⁴ It must be said, though, that even in the Greco–Roman world the Moon was an important figure in the cults of Antinous.²³⁵ The mythological references to Heracles (**F2**, vv. 10–11), Narcissus (**F6**, v. 3), Hyacinthus (v. 4), and Adonis (v. 5) makes a Hellenizing background more plausible than an Egyptian one.

If we take the anonymous poem as a text on the *patria* of Antinopolis, the final section on Capitoline Zeus, Diocletian, Diogenes, and the anonymous procurator of the Heptanomia can be easily explained. The public reading of the poem – already hypothesized by Rea²³⁶ – justifies it. Lines 32–35 reveal that the anonymous ἐπίτροπος of

²³⁰ See the commentary to **F6**, vv. 16–17.

²³¹ Cf. **F2**, v. 4.

²³² See the commentary to **F6**, v. 10.

²³³ See the commentary to **F3**, vv. 12–13; **F4**, vv. 4–5; **F6**, vv. 1, 12, 14.

²³⁴ Cf. 2008, 55.

²³⁵ Some examples in the commentary to **F6**, v. 14.

²³⁶ Cf. 1996, 1–2.

the Heptanomia attended the performance.²³⁷ His presence demonstrates that the poem was written (or updated)²³⁸ for an official moment: the poetic context hypothesized by Rea, for instance;²³⁹ otherwise, another urban festivity. For this reason, the lines on Diocletian were placed at the end of the poem: they were the due homage to the authority of the emperor, who ruled the province under the protection of *Jupiter Optimus Maximus* and through his subordinates.

No source mentions any *Patria of Antinopolis: rebus sic stantibus*, the poet must remain anonymous.²⁴⁰ For the dating of his activity, the

²³⁷ For the identification of this official and his public role, see the commentary to **F6**, vv. 32–35.

²³⁸ One could also presume that the section on Zeus, Diocletian, and the others was added to an already existing poem in order to have it read in a public celebration. Indeed, the style of the last verses is a bit different from that of the preceding ones. To give an example, the sentences of lines 18–39 somewhat frequently occupy more than a single verse, with a continuous use of *enjambments* (e.g. vv. 18–20; 23–25; 26–28; etc.), whereas the structure of the preceding lines is more regular. The official nature of the added section could justify this divergence. Although the hypothesis is not impossible, two observations must be done. First, given the fragmentary state of the poem, we cannot affirm that the last lines are stylistically different from the rest of the composition; we must say, instead, that they are different from what has survived. Nothing impedes, though, that other (lost) parts of the poem presented a style recalling that of lines 18–39. Second, even if the section on Zeus and Diocletian had been added later, it would not change the fact that the poem was copied and presented in public as a unitary text. Therefore, we have to study it as a single composition. To summarize: the idea of a later addition to a preceding poem on Antinous cannot be demonstrated and does not change our approach to the composition. It can be left aside.

²³⁹ Cf. Rea 1996, 2.

²⁴⁰ Even Livrea's attribution to Soterichus has to be rejected: no testimony refers *Patria of Antinopolis* to his hand (cf. 1999, 69–71). The echoes of Nonnus' poetry highlighted by the scholar are not enough to demonstrate Soterichus' paternity of the poem. Just on the base of the Dionysian topics, the scholar found in the poet of Panopolis «un complesso di allusioni [...] a Soterico» (1999, 70). Since the text of *P. Oxy. LXIII* 4352 anticipates some textual solutions of Nonnus, Livrea added: «la serie di consonanze del nuovo papiro con Nonno [...] si giustifica con l'imitazione, da parte del Panopolitano, di *tutta* l'opera del dionisiaco Soterico» (*ibid.*, *loc. cit.*). Such a reasoning is disputable: on the one hand, Livrea postulated that Nonnus took inspiration from Soterichus, even if such a dependence cannot be proved because of the lack of texts; on the other hand, he used this (hypothetic) influence to refer the papyrus of Oxyrhynchus to Soterichus. It risks to be a parallogism: a) Nonnus quoted Soterichus; b) the

hypothesis of Rea (= between 284 and 286 AD) is the most plausible. A later dating – such as that of Livrea, Gigli Piccardi, and Agosti (= after 297 AD) – is invalidated by the lack of references to the tetrarchy (cf. vv. 21–22). One could think that the missing colleagues of Diocletian were mentioned somewhere in the lost sections of the poem. Yet, their absence in the official conclusion remains suspicious.²⁴¹ Since Maximianus was appointed Augustus in 286 AD, Rea's proposal avoids the problem. Furthermore, it also explains the reference to the prefect Diogenes (cf. v. 27), a problem for those who try to date the poem to the end of the third century.²⁴²

papyrus was used by Nonnus; c) the papyrus was written by Soterichus. The huge number of Nonnus' models makes an identification of the poem on Antinous particularly difficult. That Nonnus used it is not impossible: yet, such a use is not a proof of Soterichus' authorship.

²⁴¹ For this point in particular, see the introduction to **n. 4**.

²⁴² See the commentary to **F 6**, vv. 26–28.

Fragmenta

Πάτρια Ἀντινοουπόλεως / Ἀντινοείας (?)

1

P. Oxy. LXIII 4352, F 1 Rea (F 3 Livrea)²⁴³

sum.

]. α ι ρ . [.] τ ι α . . [. . . .] . . [
] ω ν π α ρ α γ [.] ι τ ρ . . . [
] π ο τ [.] . σ ι [ν] ε [π] ι ρ [
] . δ ο ν κ α ι μ α ν τ ι ν ρ η . [.] [
] . ω τ ι σ [. .] ρ . . [	5
] σ σ ι ν α . . [.] . [.] . ε . [
] τ η ν μ . . . [.] . [
] . α ν ω ξ ι φ ο ς [
] ε . . ι σ . . [
] . [ . . . ] . [	10
]. . [
] . . . [
] . [. .] . [
] . . [
] . . [ . . ] . [	15
] . . [. . .] . [
] . σ κ [

2

P. Oxy. LXIII 4352, F 2 Rea (F 4 Livrea)

. . .

²⁴³ Given the poor reading of the first five fragments, I just provide a diplomatic transcription of them. For attempts of interpretation, see the commentary. For what concerns the sixth fragment, I inserted in the apparatus only the corrections officially applied in critical editions (basically, those of Rea 1996 and Livrea 2002). For any other hypothetical integrations, see the commentary to the verses.

.αιψα..[].[
.εδα.ι		
]		
].δεφαρετρα[
].οντοδεγευρ..		5
]γερο.[.].		
]νοιο		
].[.].ινην		
]ανακουων	σ.	
[		10
].νδενεμειην]	
]ηρακληος]	
]..λα..[.].μορφη	υ[
]....	.[
]ναι[.].σ	η[	15
].[.]....	.[
].	.ι.	
[
	. .	
[
...		

3

P. Oxy. LXIII 4352, F 3 Rea (F 5 Livrea)
sum.

]διοσομιχλην	
]μοσαηρ	
](vac.)χθοναπασανα...[
].ν κη.υ..σαε[.]λ.[
]η..τ.[.]ηναματ.σαν[	5
].[.].[...]	
].σατοσαλπιγξ	
].κηρυξ	
].ναχηστεκαιαυδησ	
].ποτεδauτωι	10

] θ ε ν τ α [. .]	10
] . ε λ α ω ν	
] υ τ η ρ α σ	
] . δ ε π ε τ ρ [. .]	
] . ρ η ν	
] . ρ ω ν	15
] δ ρ ν τ ω ν	
] ν .	
] . α ι σ	
] . λ η ι	
]	20
] .	
]	
] σ	
] .	
]	25
] η ν	
]	
] .	
] .	
] vac. 10 vv.	30 – 40
] ι	
] . ρ ι	

6

P. Oxy. LXIII 4352, F 5. II Rea (F 8 Livrea)

εὔρε δὲ τερπομένη ζωάγριον Ἀντιν[όσιοι,
θήρης μνημοσύνην, νίκης θάλος, .[
αἰδέομαι, Νάρκισσε, τεὴν σκιοειδέα μ[ορφήν,
δακρυχέω δ' Ὑάκινθον ἀπηνέα δίσκ[ον
σὴν δὲ κατο[ι]κτεῖρω θηραγρεσίην, α[
λειμῶν δ' Ἀντινόσιοι καὶ ἡμερο[
οὐ πηγὴν, οὐ δίσκον ὀλέθριον, οὐ . . . [

5

τῷ δὲ μετ' Ἀντίνοον νύμφαι σ[τέ]φον ἄνθει π[
 εἰσέ[τι] ῥυομένῳ θαλερὴν θηρ[ήτο]ρος αἰχμή[ν].
 ἐς Νεῖλον δ' ἔσπευσε λεόντεον αἶμα καθῆραι, 10
 ἢ δὲ φ[αε]ῖνοτέρησιν ἐπ' ἐλπωρῇσι Σελήνῃ
 κέκλετο μαρμαίρειν θαλαμ[η]πόλον ἄστερ . [
 κύκλῳ δὲ στέψασα νέον φάος ἔσχ[ε]ν ἀκ[οίτην].
 δῶρον δ' Ἀδρια[ν]οῖο πόλι[ς], Νεῖλοι[ο] δὲ νῆ[σος].
 ἢ μὲν ἐριστάφυλος γλυκερῷ παρ[ά] γείτο[νι] κεῖται, 15
 ἢ δὲ λελεγμένον ἄνθος Ἀχαιῖδος ἐστι . [
 ἔστεπται λιμένεσσι γ' ἄριστεύειν πεδίοι[ο].

Ζεὺς μόγισ οἰκτεῖρας γενεὴν Καπιτώλιος ἀν[δρῶν]
 κοιρανὴν πάσης τραφερῆς πάσης τε θαλάσση[ς]
 ὥπασεν ἀντιθέῳ Διοκλητιανῷ βασιλῆϊ. 20
 μνημοσύνην δ' ἀχέων προτέρων σβέσσε[ν] εἴ τις ἔτ' αἰνοῖς
 μοχθίζει δεσμοῖσιν ἀφεγγέος ἔνδοθι χ[ώ]ρ[ου].
 ἀλλὰ πατήρ μὲν παῖδα, γυνή θ' ἐὼν ἄνδρα λυθῆ[ντας]
 εἰσοράα καὶ γνωτὸς ἀδελφεὸν οἷα μολόντας
 εἰς φάος ἢ 'ελίοιο τὸ δεύτερον ἐξ Αἴδαο. 25
 ἀσπασίως δ' ἀγαθοῖο φιλοφροσύνην βασιλῆ[ος]
 δέξατο Διογένης ῥυσίπτολις, ἐς δὲ πόληας
 ὀτραλέως προέηκε πόνων πολυγηθέα λήθην.
 γηθοσύνη 'ὶ πᾶς χῶρος ἰαίνεται ὥς ἐπὶ φωτ[ί]
 χρυσεῖς γενεῆς, ἀνδροκτασίης τε λιασθεῖ[ς] 30
 κεῖται ἀναιμῶτι κολεῶν ἐν[[δ]]'τ'οσθε σίδηρος
 καὶ σὺ δὲ δω[[δ]]'τ'ίνην βασιληῖδα πᾶσι γεγηθῶ[ς],
 [Ε]πτὰ Νομῶν, ἡγγεῖλας, ἐπίτροπε. σεῖο δὲ Νεῖλος
 μειλίχην καὶ πρόσθεν ἐπήνεσεν, ὅπποτε κεδ[νῆ]
 εὐδικίῃ δῖεπες Νειλωῖδος ἄστρα Θήβης. 35
 ἀλλ', ὦ [χ]λαιοφόροιο μάκαρ σκηπτοῦκε χοροῖο,
 λισσομένῳ μοι ἄρηξον. ἐπ'εἴ καὶ νυκτὶ καὶ ἡοῖ
 ἡμετέροις καμάτοισιν'ν ἐπίσκοπος αὐτὸς ἔη[σθα],
 στέψον Ὀλυμπιάδος με τεῆς πε[[δ]]'τ'άλο[ισ]ιν ἐ[λαίης].

1. Ἀντιν[όοιο] : cum Rea || 2. θάλος, [: Π | θ., ἔ[ρνος vel ὄ[ρμος] Ἐρώτων Livrea
 || 3. μ[ορφήν] : cum Rea || 4. δίσκ[ον] : cum Rea | δίσκ[ον] ὀλέσσαι Livrea || 5. α[:
 Π | ἀ[βρὲ] κοῦρε Livrea || 6. ἡμερο[: Π | ἡμερό[εν] θάλος αὐτοῦ Livrea || 7. οὐ . . . [
 : Π | οὐ φύγ' [ὀδόντα Livrea || 8. π[: Π | π[λοχμούς] Rea | π[υρσῶ] Livrea || 9.

εἰσέ[τι] : cum Rea | εἰσέτ[ι] Livrea || **10.** καθῆραι : cum Rea || **11.** Σελήνη : cum Livrea | Σελήνη[Rea || **12.** ἄστερ . [: Π | ἀστέρᾱ [νυκτός Livrea || **13.** ἔσχ[ε]ν ἀκ[οίτην] : cum Rea || **14.** νῆ[σος] : cum Rea || **15.** γείτο[νι] κεῖται : cum Rea || **16.** ἄνθος – ἐστι . [: cum Rea | ἄνθος (Ἀχαιῖδος ἐστὶ γ[ενέθλης] Livrea || **17.** πεδίοι[o] : cum Rea || **18.** ἀν[δρῶν] : cum Rea || **19.** θαλάσση[ς] : cum Rea || **21.** σβέσσε[ν] εἴ τις ἔτ' αἰνοῖς : cum Rea || **22.** χ[ώ]ρ[ου] : cum Rea || **23.** λυθέ[ντας] : cum Rea || **24.** μολόντας : cum Livrea | μολόντας[Rea || **26.** βασιλῆς : cum Rea || **27.** Διογένης : cum Rea | διογένης Livrea || **29.** φωτ[ί] : cum Rea || **30.** λιασθεῖ[ς] : cum Rea || **31.** σίδηρος : cum Livrea | σίδηροσ[.] Rea || **32.** γεγηθῶ[ς] : cum Rea || **33.** Νεῖλος : cum Livrea | Νεῖλος [Rea || **34.** κεδ[νῆ] : cum Rea || **38.** ἔρ[σθα] : cum Rea || **39.** ἐ[λαίης] : cum Rea

But she found the ransom of Antinous and rejoiced,
the memory of the hunt, the brunch of the victory [...].

I have pity, Narcissus, on your shadowy figure,
I bewail Hyacinthus, who [...] the rough discus,

I have compassion on your hunt, [...],

5

but Antinous' meadow and the lovely [...]
not the source, not the deadly discus, nor [...].

After Antinous, the nymphs made crowns (?) with the [...] flower,
which preserves to this day the sturdy spare of the hunter.

He hurried to the Nile, to clean the blood of the lion,

10

but Selene upon more brilliant hopes

ordered to an astral (?) waitress to sparkle;

she garlanded the new light with the halo and took him for her husband.

A city was the gift of Hadrian, an island that of the Nile.

The latter lies, rich in grapes, beside the sweet neighbor,

15

the former, [...] the picked flower of Achaea,

has been crowned for its harbors as the best of the plane.

At last, Capitoline Zeus had pity on the human race

and gave the lordship of the whole land and the entire sea

to the king Diocletian, equal to the gods.

20

He quenched the memory of earlier pains, if someone still
suffers in horrible chains in an obscure place.

Now, on the contrary, a father meets his son, a wife her husband,

a brother his brother: they are released, as if they moved

for a second time from Hades to the light of the sun.

25

Gladly Diogenes, the savior of cities, received
the favor of the good king, and to the cities
readily dispatched the gladsome oblivion of pains.
The whole land takes delight of its joy, as at the light
of a golden age. The iron, drawn back from the slaughter of men, 30
lies in the scabbard without shedding blood.
You too gladly announced the royal gift to all,
Procurator of the Heptanomia. In the past, the Nile
already praised your gentleness, when you governed
the cities of Nilotic Thebes with care and integrity. 35
But now, you blessed lord of the choir wearing the military cloak,
I beg you to help me. Since, during night and day,
you have been the custodian of our labors,
crown me with the leaves of your Olympian olive.

Commentary

F 1

Source date: third century AD.

v. 1.] . α ι ρ ρ . [.] ι α . . [. . . .] . . [: the first fragment of *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352 (5.5 x 9 cm) is extensively abraded. As Rea noticed, “the greater abrasion [...] suggests that it was furthest to the left [...], nearer the outside of the manuscript when it was rolled up” (1996, 3). For this reason, he considered it the first fragment of the poem, supposedly coming from the first column of the roll. The remains of the top margin reveal that the first verse was at the beginning of the column.²⁴⁴ The hypothetical position of the fragment goes against the hypothesis of Livrea, who placed it in the middle of Soterichus’ poem.²⁴⁵ Concerning the letters of v. 1, their meaning is impossible to decipher. No plausible word contains the sequence]αιρρ[: it is better to divide it. A hypothetical separation]αι (= κ]αί?) ορ[could be plausible, but cannot be verified.

v. 2.] ω ν π α ρ α γ [.] ι τ ρ . . . [: since no attested word includes the letters]ωνπα[, the sequence must be divided. The best option is to separate the first two letters (ων) from the rest. Many possibilities are at our disposal to identify them: they could come from the plural genitive of a substantive, a demonstrative pronoun, or an adjective (=]ων); as an alternative, they could be interpreted as a relative pronoun (ὃν) or as the present participle of the verb εἰμί (ῶν). The lack of the preceding text and the abundance of possible identifications make the solution impossible to find. The interpretation of the following letters (παργ[.]ιτρ[.] is likewise difficult. Rea suggested two possible integrations.²⁴⁶ The former is παρὰ γέ[τρ[.]ν], “beside the neighbor”. If it were correct, the text would anticipate another passage of the poem, namely **F6** v. 15 (see below): unfortunately, as Rea himself noted, “the

²⁴⁴ Rea 1996, 3.

²⁴⁵ Cf. 2002, 24–27; see **n. 4**.

²⁴⁶ Cf. 1996, 10.

spacing and traces seem not to suit” (1996, *loc. cit.*). The second alternative is the unattested παραγειτον. It is as problematic as the former one: as Rea observed, it “could suit, but the last two traces become intractable” (1996, *loc. cit.*). There is another possibility at our disposal: the present optative mid-passive of παράγω, i.e. παράγοιτο. It must be said, though, that the use of the optative in late Greek is not as frequent as it was before.²⁴⁷ To summarize, a safe interpretation of the line is not possible.

v. 3.] ποτ[.]. σι[υ]ε[π]ιρ [: the line could begin with the particle πότε, were it not for the problematic reading of the following letters. Indeed, the sequence]σινεπιρ[is never attested in Greek literature and should be split: a division]σιν + ἐπὶ + ρ[looks plausible, but requires more than one letter to complete the first word. It is probably necessary to include also the first three letters (ποτ) and a part of the fallen text preceding them.

v. 4.]. δονκαυμαγτινρη. [.] [: a plausible reading of the line is]δον + καὶ + Μαντινότη. What remains of the first word can be explained in many different ways. It could be the final part of a noun, such as the feminine accusative ὁ]δόν (“the way, the road”), or the neuter πέ]δον, (“the plain”). Both substantives match the representation of a hunt (cf. **F2**, v. 4). Otherwise, one could interpret it as a verb: a participle might work (e.g. the neuter ᾄ]δον, “singing”), but nothing excludes another form (such as the indicative aorist εἶ]δον, “I / they saw”). Finally, one could consider the relict of an adjective (e.g. the masculine / neuter accusative ἔμπε]δον, “steadfast”), or of an adverb (e.g. ἐν]δον, “within, inside”). All these words are frequently used in epics. As this brief examination reveals, the possibilities are too many to reach safe conclusions. The second name of the verse is more promising. The form Μαντινότη is a literary *hapax*, but appears as a feminine name in three Egyptian documents (all of them revealing strong connections

²⁴⁷ Cf. O’Sullivan 2012.

with Antinous and Antinopolis).²⁴⁸ It could refer to a female character in this context as well. Rea found evidence of this in another papyrus, namely *P. Oxy.* L 3537:²⁴⁹ while addressing Antinous, it presents him as Μαντινόης . [. . .] καὶ ἀγλαοῦ Ἑρμείαο (v. 2).²⁵⁰ Since Hermes is presented as the father of Antinous in other literary texts,²⁵¹ Rea suggested reading the line as a reference to the parents of the youth.²⁵² The idea was supported by Livrea, who integrated the versus as follows: Μαντινόης φ[ίλος υἱὲ] καὶ ἀγλαοῦ Ἑρμείαο, “you, the dear son of Mantinoe and of the splendid Hermes”.²⁵³ Following this interpretation, one could consider the μ α ν τ ι ν ο ῖ η . of line 4 as a mention of Antinous’ mother. The hypothesis looks highly plausible. Her name could have been used by the poet to define Antinous (e.g. as Μαντινόη[ς υἱός, “the son of Mantinoe”: but there are many other possibilities); otherwise, she could have been one of the characters of the poem. In the latter case, the fragment should focus on “an early stage of the story” (Rea 1996, 4). While commenting the passage, Rea provided two other alternative readings: a) Ἀντινοῦ[ος (= the genitive of Ἀντινοεύς);²⁵⁴ b) Ἀντινόη (= the mythical foundress of Mantinea).²⁵⁵ Neither are impossible: on the one hand, *P. Cair. Masp.* I 67120 reports a fragment of Dioscorus of Aphroditos (i.e. a poet coming from the same Egyptian context as our author); on the other hand, imperial Mantinea was one of the most important centers for the cults of Antinous.²⁵⁶ In spite of these elements,

²⁴⁸ Cf. Winkel 1899, II 1188, 3; Wessely 1905, 127, 73; *P. Stras.* V 323, 15. Rea (1996, 10) hypothesized a reference also in a fourth document, that is, *P. Oslo.* III 129, 16.

²⁴⁹ *MP³* 1849, 1 = *LDAB* 5556.

²⁵⁰ The reading Μαντινόης was plausibly proposed by Rea: the *editio princeps* had μάντιν σῆς instead.

²⁵¹ See, for instance, Antinous’ epyllion of Pancrates. For further information about it, cf. **F2**, v. 4.

²⁵² Cf. 1996, 10.

²⁵³ Cf. 2002, 20: the scholar considered the kinship between Hermes and Antinous a proof of the connection between *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352 and *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481: cf. the introduction to **n. 4**.

²⁵⁴ Cf. *P. Cair. Masp.* I 67120 v. B 13, 14.

²⁵⁵ Cf. Rea 1996, 10–11.

²⁵⁶ Further information about Dioscorus of Aphroditos in McCoull 1988. For what concerns the connections between Antinous and Mantinea, see Jones 2010, 78–81.

I would support Rea's first reading: the mention of Antinous' mother is more consistent with the rest of the poem than a genitive form attested only in the sixth century AD, or the name of a city placed so far from the narrative context. This mysterious woman is evoked also by the obelisk of Pincius, which celebrates "la semence d'un dieu qui se manifeste réellement dans son corp [...] [...] du] ventre intact de sa mère".²⁵⁷ A hymn from Curium seems to define her χρυσοπτέρυγος, "with golden wings", but the reference is not sure.²⁵⁸

v. 5.] . ω τ ι σ [. .] ρ . . [: like many other passages of the poem, the sequence]ωτισ[can be interpreted in many ways. One of them is particularly tempting: the superlative πρῶτισ[τος (from the adjective πρῶτος), "the very first, the best" is frequently used by Homer²⁵⁹ and other epic poets (such as Apollonius of Rhodes²⁶⁰ and – most importantly – Nonnus).²⁶¹ If the *patria* described the Libyan hunt of Hadrian and Antinous (cf. **F2**, v. 4), nothing precludes the superlative being attributed to the emperor.

v. 6.] σ σ ι ν α . . [.] . [.] . ε . [: another problematic sequence. No Greek word includes the letters]σσινα[, and separating the first sigma from the rest does not change the situation. Dividing the sequence]σσιν + α[, one could refer the first letters to a plural epic dative (such as the Homeric βέλεσσιν,²⁶² ἐπέεσσιν,²⁶³ or ἡρώεσσιν).²⁶⁴ This form of dative remains as a stylistic mark until the age of Nonnus, who frequently uses

²⁵⁷ The passage is on the third face of the obelisk (= north face = III Erman). The French translation of the hieroglyphics comes from Grenier 2008, 25.

²⁵⁸ Cf. Mitford 1971, 196; Lebek 1973, 127–130; Rea 1996, 10.

²⁵⁹ E.g. *Il.* II 228, XVI 656; *Od.* XIV 220, XIX 447.

²⁶⁰ Cf. *I* 422, II 266, 632.

²⁶¹ Cf. *D.* V 229, VII 314, XVIII 123, etc.

²⁶² From the substantive βέλος, «arrow, dart»: cf. *Il.* I 42, XIII 555, XXIV 759; *Od.* III 280, V 124, XI 173, XI 199, XV 411.

²⁶³ Epic dative of ἔπος, «word»: cf. *Il.* I 223, 304, 519, II 75, 164, 180, 189, etc.; *Od.* II 189, 323, III 148, IV 286, 461, VI 143, VII 341, VIII 77, etc.

²⁶⁴ From the substantive ἥρως, «hero»: cf. *Il.* II 483, 579, XIII 346, XVI 144, XIX 391, XIII 645.

it.²⁶⁵ Such a reading is the best hypothesis, even if we cannot determine which letters completed the word.

v. 7.] τ η ν μ . . . [.] . [: if we interpret the Μαντινὴ of line 4 as a reference to Antinous' mother (see above), we could hazard the integration τὴν μητέρα, "the mother". Unfortunately, the elements at our disposal are too scanty to support it.

v. 8.] . α υ ω ξ ι φ ο σ [: the reference to a ξίφος, i.e. to a "sword", reveals a war contest, but fits also the description of a hunt emerging from **F2**. The most economic reading of the preceding three letters is the adverb ἄνω, "upwards", which is frequently associated with verbs implying motion.²⁶⁶ The line could have represented one of the characters while raising the sword to hit something (the lion of **F5**, v. 8?), or trying to do so. Nothing prevents us considering]ανω the last section of a longer word, though. In this case, the possible integrations would be countless, and a solution to the enigma impossible.

vv. 9. – 17.] ε . . ι σ . . [[...]] . σ κ [: the last nine lines of the fragment are unreadable.

F 2

Source date: third century AD.

. . . : the second fragment (2.5 x 8.5 cm) includes two columns of text. To the right of the former, a sheet join is visible. As Rea highlighted, it demonstrates that the column cannot be the same as that of **FF 3–4** (they do not present any join).²⁶⁷ On the position of the text in the poem, the scholar suggests two possibilities: a) it was originally in the same column of **F1**, at the beginning of the roll (or close to it: see above). Rea presented this as the most economical hypothesis; b) it was near **F5**: both the fragments mention a lion (see below the reference to Heracles

²⁶⁵ See, for instance, *D.* I 184, 197, 261, 276, 285, 419, etc.

²⁶⁶ Cf. *LSJ*, 169.

²⁶⁷ Cf. 1996, 3.

and Nemea of vv. 10–11; cf. **F5**, v. 8). Both hypotheses are plausible and there is no way to decide between them: on the one hand, nothing guarantees that the most economical hypothesis is the correct one;²⁶⁸ on the other hand, the presence of a lion in two fragments does not prove the nearness of them. For what we can determine, the hunt was one of the central topics of the poem (see below): we can reasonably suppose that the references to it were not limited to a single section of the composition.

v. 1.] . α ι ψ α . . [] . [: the adverb αἵψα (“quick, forthwith, suddenly”)²⁶⁹ is frequently used by Homer²⁷⁰ and other epic authors (such as Callimachus,²⁷¹ Apollonius of Rhodes,²⁷² and Nonnus).²⁷³ It is therefore a good candidate for the passage. If the fragment described the hunt of Hadrian and his lover, the adverb could refer to a sudden movement of the lion (see below). It must be highlighted, though, that the abrasion of the fragment makes its reading highly speculative. Just to provide two alternatives, the sequence of letters could be interpreted as αἵψ’ α[(the elision of the adverb is quite common),²⁷⁴ or as]αι ψα[. The last hypothesis would allow many different interpretations. The sequence]αι could be taken as the conclusion of a conjunction (κ]αὶ ψα[); alternatively, one could suppose the plural of a substantive (e.g. θηρευτ]αί, “hunters”), a pronoun (e.g. ἄλλ]αι, “other”), an adjective (e.g. πολλ]αί, “many”), or a participle (e.g. διωκόμεν]αι, “being pursued”); an infinite would be a good possibility as well (e.g. the present εἶν]αι, “to be”, or the aorist κτεῖν]αι, “to kill”). The same difficulties would be raised by the sequence ψα[.

v. 2.] . ξ δ α . ι : the papyrus is particularly ruined here, and the letters are difficult to decipher.

²⁶⁸ Cf. 1996, *loc. cit.*

²⁶⁹ Cf. *LSJ*, 45.

²⁷⁰ See, for instance, *Il.* I 303, 387; II 664, 808; III 145; IV 70, 118 etc. ; *Od.* I 392; II 6, 292; III 147, 456; IV 283; V 320, 461, etc.

²⁷¹ E.g. *FF* 24 (v. 9), 151 (v. 1), 244 (v. 1), 260 (v. 63) Pfeiffer.

²⁷² The occurrences in the first book of the *Argonautica* are enough to demonstrate it: cf. I 15, 371, 439, 842, 993, 1051, 1107, 1221, 1250.

²⁷³ Cf. *D.* II 461; XIII 35; XXXIV 101.

²⁷⁴ See, for instance, *Hom. Il.* V 97; VII 272; XVII 116, 682, etc.

v. 3.] : the line is completely unreadable because of a rip.

v. 4.] . δ ε φ α ρ ε τ ρ α [: the most reliable reading of the line is δὲ φαρέτρα[(“but the quiver”). The case of the substantive is not certain. Along with the references to Heracles and Nemea (cf. vv. 10–11), the line reveals that a hunt was one of the topics of the poem (if not the main one). Most likely, it described the last chase before Antinous’ death, i.e. the lion hunt in the Libyan desert (summer 130 AD).²⁷⁵ Such a hypothesis is supported by the reference to the Nemean lion (cf. v. 10). Athenaeus’ testimony allows us to reconstruct the episode:²⁷⁶ he notes that Hadrian and his lover decided to chase a lion “which was an enormous creature, and had been ravaging all Libya for a long time” (μέγα χρῆμα ὄντα καὶ πολλῷ χρόνῳ κατανεμηθέντα πᾶσαν τὴν Λιβύην). They reached the beast and the emperor killed it. One century before our poem, the episode had already been sung by the poet Pancrates of Alexandria, who had composed a epyllion celebrating it. For this reason, he was awarded by Hadrian with admission to the Museum. Fragments of the poem have been preserved by *P. Brit. Mus.* 1109b, *P. Oxy.* VIII 1085 ii 9, and Athenaeus himself.²⁷⁷ The grammarian of Naucratis provides a brief introduction to the composition. Pancrates is said to have associated the rosy lotus to Antinous’ hunt: according to him, the flower germinated from the blood of the Libyan lion; for this reason, he proposed to name it Ἀντινόειος.²⁷⁸ A reference to the flower is also made by the *Patria of Antinopolis* (cf. **F6**, v. 1): this is just one of the many similarities between it and Pancrates’ epyllion (for further examples, see below). Such a resemblance shows how the former work became a model for all the texts dealing with Antinous’ end. As Grenier noted, “le poème de Pancratès [...] a servi de texte de reference [...], en offrant de

²⁷⁵ For a presentation of the episode, cf. Lambert 1984, 118–121.

²⁷⁶ Cf. *Deipn.* XV 21.

²⁷⁷ For an introduction to the poet, see Garzya 1984. The critical text of Antinous’ epyllion is reported by Heitsch 1961, 51–54.

²⁷⁸ Further information about the flower and its attestations in Rea 1996, 13. Particularly interesting is the text reported by *P. Mil. Vogliano* I 20, col. II 25–III 25 (cf. Meyer 1991, 255): it exhorts Antinous’ flower, and some textual choices are similar to those of our papyrus (cf. **F6**, v. 7).

la “ geste ” d’Antinoos une version sinon officielle du moins assez célèbre et “classique”” (2008, 53).

v. 5.] . ο ν τ ο δ ε γ ε υ ρ . . : Magnelli suggested the reading τανύ]οντο δὲ νευρ[αί, “the bows were strung”.²⁷⁹ The line should describe the preparation for the hunt. As the scholar noted, the combination of τανύω with the substantive νευρά is attested in other epic passages.²⁸⁰ The hypothesis is particularly convincing: it both proposes a solution which is in line with the linguistic uses of ancient epic and does not conflict with the general content of the fragment.

v. 6.] γ ε ρ ο . [.] : given the mention of Heracles and the Nemean lion (see below), Magnelli cagily suggested the integration γέρον[τ]ι, “to the old man”.²⁸¹ The passage should refer to Molorcus, the old man who hosted Heracles during his first labor.²⁸² The hypothesis is not impossible, but the marginality of the episode makes it quite difficult to accept.

v. 7.] ν ο ι ο : the line seems to reports the rest of an epic genitive. Nothing more can be said.

v. 8.] . [.] ι ν η ν : we could interpret the sequence as the final portion of a singular feminine name; otherwise, we could surmise an adjective or a participle.

v. 9.] α ν α κ ο υ ω ν : nothing impedes reading the sequence as the present participle of ἀνακούω, “to listen further”. It must be noted, though, that the meaning of the verb can scarcely be integrated with the rest. Furthermore, as the *TLG* shows, it is never used by epic poets. Separating the first two letters from the rest is the best solution: one obtains the sequence]αν – which can be explained in many different ways (too many to reach a definitive explanation) – and the present

²⁷⁹ Cf. 1998, 61.

²⁸⁰ Cf. *Od.* XIX 587, XXI 97, 127, XXIV 171; Nonn. *D.* XXXIII 120.

²⁸¹ Cf. 1998, *loc. cit.*

²⁸² Cf. Call. F 57, 3 Pfeiffer; [Apol.] *Bibl.* 2, 74; Steph. Byz. *Eth.* s.v. Μολορχία (μ 202 Billerbeck).

participle of the verb ἀκούω, “to listen to”. The verse likely presented one of the (male) characters of the poem listening to someone/thing else: such a scene can be easily included in the representation of a hunt.

v. 10.] ν δ ε ν ε μ ε ι η ν : the best reading is] ν δὲ Νεμείην.²⁸³ The text clearly makes reference to the city of Nemea, where Heracles succeeded in his first labor, and killed the lion.²⁸⁴ The name of the place – traditionally located between Argos and Corinth²⁸⁵ – is reported in the epic form. Like the mention of the hero of the following verse, the passage is instrumental to understand the hunting theme of the poem. In all probability, the image of Heracles killing the Nemean lion was used by the poet as a mythical parallel of Hadrian and Antinous’ chase. As an alternative, one could consider a prayer / sacrifice preceding the hunt and evoking the mythic deed (see below).

v. 11.] η ρ α κ λ η ο ς : the mention of Heracles concluding the hexameter goes along with the reference to Nemea (see above). The choice of the epic genitive Ἡρακλῆος instead of the traditional Ἡρακλέος aims to respect the metric of the last foot (— X). A sacrifice to the god is represented on one of Hadrian’s roundels on Constantine’s Arch:²⁸⁶ nothing excludes the same scene from being described by the poem too. Hadrian and his favorite could have been represented while praying to the god before the hunt. The reference to the tetrarch Maximian *Herculius* put forth by Gigli Piccardi is less convincing (cf. **F6**, v. 20).

v. 12.] .. λ α .. [] .. μ ο ρ φ η : the case of μορφή (“form”) is not clear. The text apparently reports the substantive in the nominative; however, as Rea rightly observed, the papyrus occasionally omits the iota adscript (e.g. **F 6**, v. 8; see also **F 4**, v. 5). The loss of the context impedes the solution of the problem.

²⁸³ So Rea (1996, 6) and Livrea (2002, 24).

²⁸⁴ The fight with the Nemean lion and the later use of its skin are narrated by many sources: see, for instance, Ael. 12, 7; [Ap.] *Bibl.* II 5, 1; Diod. IV 11, 4; Hes. *Theog.* 327. Cf. Tyrrell 2002.

²⁸⁵ Cf. Pin. *O.* 9, 87.

²⁸⁶ Cf. Kitzinger 1977, 7.

v. 13.] : the words of the verse are erased.

v. 14.] γ α ι [.] . ς: the bad state of the fragment presents us from understanding the final word of the line. The empty space supposedly contained two letters. We can therefore suspect that the diphthong αι was the penultimate syllable of the verse, and that it preceded the final anceps.

vv. 9. – 17. ϣ . [[...] . . [: the six lines of the second column are not readable, except for a few letters. Their place in the poem obviously depends on the position of the previous column of the fragment. If we return to the two hypotheses of Rea (see above), we can take two different scenarios into account. The former is based on the “most economical” reconstruction: the first column of the fragment comes from the same column of **F1**; if this fragment derives from the first column of the poem, **F2** col. 2 must be a remainder of the second one. The second hypothesis links **F2** to **F5** on the base of the topic (i.e. the lion hunt): in this case, the second column of the former fragment could be placed under the verses of the latter (to summarize, **F2** col. 2 = **F5**); therefore, **F2** col. 1 should come from the column preceding that of **F5**.²⁸⁷ As already stated, both interpretations are plausible, although none of them is entirely irreproachable (see above). Other difficulties are provided by the position of **FF 3–4** (see below).

F 3

Source date: third century AD.

v. 1.] δ ι ο ς ο μ ι χ λ η γ: the third fragment (4,5 x 9 cm) shows the remains of the top margin. The change of hand in lines 3–5 (see below) demonstrates that it does not come from the same column of **F1** or **F5**. The absence of a sheet join reveals that it cannot be linked to **F2** col. 1 either. The fiber structure suggests that it should be brought alongside

²⁸⁷ Cf. Rea 1996, 3–4.

F4 instead.²⁸⁸ According to the most economical interpretation of Rea, the column of **FF 3–4** could be identified with that of **F2** col. 2. If **F2** col. 1 is part of the first column of the poem, **FF 3–4** must come from the second one. If we take into account the second hypothesis of the scholar, identifying **F2** col. 2 with **F5** (see above), we should move **FF 3–4** back: in this case, we could take them as the rest of the second column of the poem (leaving **F1** in his leading position). What remains of the first line can be read as follows:]διος όμίχλην. The main meaning of όμίχλη is “mist, fog”, but the substantive can also be translated with a more generic “gloom”.²⁸⁹ Rea suggested interpreting the verse as a reference to “the weather on the morning of the lion hunt” (1996, 11). The hypothesis is plausible. It must be noted, though, that όμίχλη can also refer to the darkness of the night: Nonnus occasionally uses the word in this sense.²⁹⁰ The line could belong to a nocturnal scene (a digression from the main narrative? A similitude?). The sequence preceding όμίχλη can be interpreted as the rest of a longer word (e.g. εύ]διος, “calm, warm, peaceful”:²⁹¹ the adjective could have referred to a lost substantive); nothing impedes, though, reading it as the genitive of Ζεύς (= Διός): the god could be involved in this passage, as he is at the end of the poem (cf. **F6**, v. 18).

v. 2.] μ ο ς α η ρ: the presence of άήρ, “air”, could support Rea’s interpretation of the fragment (see above), even if the reference could be easily applied to different contexts. Concerning the sequence preceding the substantive, Parsons cited the Nonnian expression νήδυμος άήρ, “sweet air”,²⁹² implying that the same adjective could have been used in this passage. Another possibility was proposed by Magnelli. The scholar highlighted that the match νήδυμος + άήρ is not attested in other passages, the adjective being normally referred to sleep (ύπνος). He suggested therefore the reading νήνε]μος άήρ, “calm

²⁸⁸ Cf. Rea 1996, 3.

²⁸⁹ Cf. *LSJ*, 1222.

²⁹⁰ Cf. *D.* IV 122; VII 310; XXXI 164. This possible use was noted also by Parsons: cf. Rea 1996, 11.

²⁹¹ The adjective is frequently attributed to the weather, as much as to air and sea: cf. *LSJ*, 710.

²⁹² Cf. *D.* XLVIII 580.

air”: thus a variant of the Homeric νήνεμος αἰθήρ.²⁹³ The stillness of nature before a divine epiphany, or – more generally – before an exceptional event is a literary *topos* and fits the representation of a great hunt.²⁹⁴ Both the proposals are equally viable: the lack of information does not allow further considerations.

v. 3.] (v.) χθονα πασαν α... [: as Rea noted, lines 3–5 are written “on a cursive style and on a larger scale than the rest” (1996, 11). Most likely, that reveals the action of a second hand.²⁹⁵ Such an intrusion is difficult to explain, and two aspects in particular are curious. On the one hand, the added lines are written on an empty space interrupting the column of text: it means that the insertion was expected, or – if not – that it filled a space left empty by the former writer. On the other hand, the sequence of the first line comes after a blank patch: as Rea noted, this empty space could show that the second hand just added the last section of the verse, not the entirety of it.²⁹⁶ If so, one could suspect that the portion of text was cut from another composition, to be adapted to its new place. A possible solution was provided by Rea, who speculated that the three verses had been added by “the poet’s own hand”; he had made “an addition which he planned and for which he instructed a space to be left in the clerk’s fair copy” (1996, *loc. cit.*). The idea is plausible, but nothing prevents us from hypothesizing the action of someone else (for instance, of one of the executors). Whoever the responsible party was, discovering the reasons for the addition is extremely difficult: the conservation of the fragment is too flawed, and the text too lacking. The sequence of letters can be divided as follows: χθόνα πασαν α[, “... the whole land / earth”. The accusative could have depended on a transitive

²⁹³ Cf. Magnelli 1998, 62. For the Homeric expression, see *Il.* VIII 556; *Ar. Th.* 43, 51; *Apoll. Rhod.* I 1154–1155; *Luc. Trag.* 129; *Lyc.* 255; *Porph. Plot.* 22 (v. 39); *Q.S.* XIV 91.

²⁹⁴ Cf. Magnelli 1998, *loc. cit.*

²⁹⁵ Rea admitted that the presence of a second author is not completely sure, but he noted also that the style of the handwritings is strongly different. And indeed, attributing the two ways of writing to the same person looks quite difficult: a superficial examination of the papyrus can reveal it.

²⁹⁶ Cf. 1996, 11.

verb (maybe introduced by the final α), but also on a preposition (e.g. ἐπὶ or εἰς). Nonnus uses the expression in both ways.²⁹⁷

v. 4.] . ν κ η . υ . . σ α ε [.] λ . [: the line is particularly ruined, but it is still possible to reconstruct some words. The text of Rea is] . ν κή[ρ]υκες ἀέθλω[.²⁹⁸ Such a reading requires further analysis: the form ἀέθλω is attested only in a scholium to Pindar, where it is presented as a mistake of the πολλοί;²⁹⁹ it would be difficult to find it in an official composition. One could consider the reported form as a singular dative (ἀέθλω > ἀέθλω); I already noted that the papyrus has the tendency to remove the iota adscript (cf. **F2**, v. 12). Another possibility – noticed by Rea in the commentary³⁰⁰ and applied by Livrea in his edition³⁰¹ – is the addition of a ν. One would obtain the plural genitive ἀέθλω[ν. In the former case, the translation should sound “... the heralds with (?) the/a prize”; in the latter, “... the heralds of the prizes”. The second reconstruction looks more plausible: the use of the plural genitive is attested also in Nonnus.³⁰² However, there is no element to demonstrate which hypothesis is correct. The reference to heralds and prizes is quite interesting. What connection could they have with a hunt in the Libyan desert? Rea cautiously suggested that the chase was presented by the poet as a contest.³⁰³ Another explanation was provided by Parsons, who linked the fragment to a description of the Capitoline festival (one of the hypothetical performance contexts of the poem: see below). Both reconstructions work, but a third hypothesis could be equally possible: the narrative of the hunt could have been interrupted by a digression concerning a battle (maybe, a mythical one). Such a pause could have been justified in different ways: it could have been the tale of one of the character, for instance, or a parallel made by the poet himself.

²⁹⁷ Cf. *D.* VI 288; XIII 427; XVIII 155, 325; XLI 92 for the former use; cf. *D.* XXXVIII 419; XLI 265; *Par.* XVII 31 for the latter.

²⁹⁸ Cf. 1996, 6.

²⁹⁹ Cf. *Schol. in Pin.* P1 191, 8.

³⁰⁰ Cf. 1996, 11.

³⁰¹ Cf. 2002, 25.

³⁰² Cf. *D.* XXV 218; XXXIV 186; XLVII 184.

³⁰³ Cf. 1996, *loc. cit.*

v. 5.] η . . τ . [.] η ν α μ α τ . σ α ν [: the meaning of the sequence is obscure. Concerning the second part, I would propose dividing it in this way:]ην ἅμα τ . σαν[. The first two letters could correspond to the last section of a word (e.g. a feminine singular accusative), the last three to the beginning of another. Between them I would place the particle ἅμα, “at once, at the same time”. Since it can be used as a preposition with dative (“together with”), I would hazard the reading]ην ἅμα τῇ σαν[. Nothing more can be said.

v. 6.] . [.] . [. .] : the line is completely illegible.

v. 7.] . σ α τ ο σ α λ π ι γ ξ : the reference to a trumpet (σάλπιγξ) perfectly fits the representation of a hunt, even if it could also match a war context (see above). The first meaning of the word is indeed “war trumpet”.³⁰⁴ Regarding the preceding letters, I would follow the proposal of Magnelli: he hypothesized the reading μυκ]ήσατο σάλπιγξ, “the trumpet sounded”.³⁰⁵ As the scholar noted, the binomial μυκάομαι – wind instruments appears already in Theocritus³⁰⁶ and is frequently used by Nonnus.³⁰⁷ The proposal has been accepted also by Livrea, who inserted it into his edition.³⁰⁸

v. 8.] . κ η ρ υ ξ : once again, a reference to a herald (κῆρυξ: cf. v. 4).

v. 9.] . ν α χ η σ τ ε κ α ι α υ δ η σ : the best reading of the passage is] . ναχης τε καὶ αὐδῆς. The first sequence can be interpreted in at least two ways: a) στ]οναχῆς (= the genitive of στοναχή, “the groan”); b) κ]αναχῆς (from καναχή, “sharp sound, clang”). Rea preferred the second form.³⁰⁹ Both possibilities are in line with the second substantive, which can mean either “human voice, speech”, or – more generally – “sound”. They

³⁰⁴ Cf. *LSJ*, 1582.

³⁰⁵ Cf. 1998, 62.

³⁰⁶ Cf. XX 75.

³⁰⁷ Cf. *D.* II 558; VI 231; XVII 93; XXIII 194; XXIX 290; XXXIX 388; XLIII 288–289, 300. Magnelli reported also other passages from other sources: cf. 1998, *loc. cit.*

³⁰⁸ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.*

³⁰⁹ Cf. 1996, 11.

are both attested in epic poems.³¹⁰ Whichever the missing substantive is, the conjunction τε καὶ reveals its strict connection with the following αὐδή: the poet supposedly wanted to represent a mix of clangs and voices. We could link it to the hunt; it must be said, though, that the suggestion of a war scene is particularly strong here.

v. 10.] . π ο τ ε δ α υ τ ω ι: in spite of the missing letters, it is possible to recognize the first word of the sequence. It is the epic ὅ]πότε, “when”. The adverb is repeated in the following line, which links it to the same pronoun (see below). The poet likely gave a similar structure to the two verses, perhaps to create a parallel between two characters or situations. It is hard to determine who the dative αὐτῷ refers to.

v. 11.] ν ο π π ο τ ε δ α υ τ ο ρ : this verse echoes the preceding one; it presents the same adverb and the same pronoun (although in a different case: dative in line 10, nominative in line 11). In both the lines, the two words are separated by the particle δ’. The identification of the mysterious αὐτός raises the same difficulties as the antecedent dative (see above).

v. 12.] λ [α] π ο . [ι] ν η σ: the interpretation of the line is problematic. Livrea interpreted it as]λ’ ἀπὸ μῆνης, “[...] from the moon”.³¹¹ A scholium to Homer notes that the substantive μῆνη can be used to refer to Selene³¹². Since the goddess is mentioned in **F4** (see below), such a reading is tempting. Unfortunately, the letter preceding the sequence νης[seems more a ι than a η: the impression is confirmed by the edition of Rea.³¹³ The reading [ι] ν η σ makes the comprehension of the line almost impossible. Taking into account the possibility that the space after the first omicron was not occupied by a letter, but remained empty, one could propose a reading]λ[α] ποινης, “[...] of pain”. An examination of the papyrus shows however that empty spaces in the writing are not so common (except for the textual gap occupied by the lines 3–5 of **F3**).

³¹⁰ Στοναχή a bit more than κανακή: the *TLG* can confirm it.

³¹¹ Cf. 2002, 25.

³¹² Cf. *Schol. vet. ad Il.* XIX 374.

³¹³ Cf. 1996, 6.

v. 13.] . ε ρ ε σ η δ η: the last three letters of the sequence could be grouped in the adverb ἤδη, “already, immediately”. The possible readings of the preceding letters are numerous. One of them is of particular interest, though: ἀστ]έρες, “the stars”. Putting this substantive along with the adverb, one obtains the sequence ἀστ]έρες ἤδη, “the stars already...”. I would interpret it as a reference to the appearance of the stars. Selene makes her first entrance in the following fragment (cf. **F4**, v. 5): the rise of the stars could announce the falling of the night and the epiphany of the goddess.

v. 14.] . . α π ο ν τ [.] σ: the substantive πόντος (“sea”) is recognizable at the end of the sequence, but its role in the text is not clear.

vv. 15 – 16.] . . [-] . . [: the lines are not readable. On the base of the fiber structure, Rea suggested connecting them to the top of **F4** (see below).

F 4

Source date: third century AD.

v. 1.] π . [: as Rea noted, “it is possible that a narrow piece projecting from the top of this scrap joins with a similar projection downwards from fr. 3” (1996, 11). For this reason, the scholar proposed to situate **F4** (4,2 x 3,5 cm) below **F3**, without excluding the possibility that the former fragment touches the latter. If we followed the suggestion, we should consider **F4**, v. 1 as the last section of **F3**, v. 15. Unfortunately, such a match does not provide much more information about the line: except for a hypothetical π, there is nothing to be read. Between the projection of **F3** and that of **F4**, there is space for one letter, or (at the most) for two.³¹⁴

v. 2.] . (vac.) : if Rea’s hypothesis is true, the empty line should correspond to the conclusion of **F3**, v. 16 (see above).

³¹⁴ Cf. Rea 1996, 11.

v. 3.] . . [.] δ . ο ι σ : the rip in the papyrus impedes reading more than four letters; the first of them is quite difficult to recognize. The possible integrations of the passage are too many to determine the right one.

v. 4.] . ι δ ' ε ο υ σ α : the line is concluded by έοϋσα, the feminine present participle of είμί. It could refer to the goddess Selene, who is mentioned in the following verse. The sign before the verb could be an apostrophe: in this case, the sequence should be interpreted as] . ι δ' έοϋσα.³¹⁵ It could also be a simple ink spot, though:³¹⁶ the reading of the passage would not change.

v. 5.] ξ λ η ν η : after some dubious references (see above), the verse explicitly introduces one of the main characters of the poem, i.e. Selene.³¹⁷ We have already seen that the papyrus has the tendency to remove the iota adscript: that means that the name of the deity could be either in the nominative (Σ]ελήνη), or in the dative (Σ]ελήνη). The goddess of the moon supposedly witnesses the last phase of the hunt and is responsible for the deification of Antinous at the end of it (cf. **F6**, vv. 11–13). The link between Hadrian's favorite and the moon is not an invention of the poet, but reflects earlier traditions. In all probability, they date back directly to the Antoninian age. One of Hadrian's roundels from Constantine's arch shows the emperor and his lover sacrificing to Diana.³¹⁸ Not far from Rome, in Lanuvium, the goddess and Antinous were considered the divine patrons of a funerary college.³¹⁹ In the second half of the second century AD, Tatian the Syrian caustically

³¹⁵ As Rea noted, the letter preceding the iota could be either a kappa, or a chi (cf. 1996, *loc. cit.*).

³¹⁶ Cf. Rea 1996, *loc. cit.*

³¹⁷ For an introduction to the goddess, her prerogatives and cults, see Préaux 1973; Buffière 1990–1991; Gantz 1993, 34–36.

³¹⁸ Cf. Coarelli–Grenier 1986, 251–252.

³¹⁹ *CIL* XIV 2112. In this case, the identification of Antinous with Silvanus, the god of savage nature, favored the match: cf. Garofalo 2014.

evoked the divine couple in his *Oration to Greeks*.³²⁰ Nothing excludes Selene playing a role also in Pancrates' poem³²¹.

v. 6.] ν ε λ α υ ν ω ν: the most immediate integration of the sequence is συ]νελαύνων, “driving together, constraining”; it must be noted, though, that the verb is not frequently used in epics (Quintus of Smyrna and Nonnus – just to quote two late antique examples – use it only once).³²² From this viewpoint, the reading]ν ἐλαύνων (“driving”) may be better. The line could describe one of the characters riding a horse (cf. **F5**, v. 7), or driving a chariot: that is indeed the most frequent use of the verb in epic.³²³ Livrea supported the hypothesis: his reading of the passage is ἵππο]ν ἐλαύνων.³²⁴

v. 7.] σ ο μ ε ν ο ι ο ρ[: at first sight, one could identify the sequence with an epic genitive. A lot of possibilities would fit the letters: ἐσ]σομένοιο (the future participle of εἶμι, “to be”), ἱμασ]σομένοιο (from the verb ἱμάσσω, “to flog”: the verb is particularly used with horses, and could fit the situation),³²⁵ ἀρασ]σομένοιο (from ἀράσσω, “to smite”, another apt verb), and many others.³²⁶ There is a problem, though. The last omicron, which is particularly damaged, was probably followed by another letter (or by more than one). Since we are not too far from the end of the line (in other words, on the right side of the column), we should hypothesize the presence of a few letters, not more. In all probability, these signs were not enough to build an entire word after the epic genitive. Taking into account all these points, it is better to separate the sequence: the only possible division is]σομενοι ορ[. The former section could include

³²⁰ Cf. 10, 1–2.

³²¹ Grenier (2008, 54–55) explained the presence of Selene in Antinous' story as a consequence of the lunar cults practiced in Hermopolis' nome.

³²² Cf. Q.S. IX 171; Nonn. *D.* XXVIII 2.

³²³ E.g. Hom. *Il.* V 366; XXIII 334; *Od.* XV 50.

³²⁴ Cf. 2002, 25.

³²⁵ Cf. Hom. *Il.* V 589; XI 531.

³²⁶ All the examples I quoted come from Nonnus' poems: cf. *D.* IV 349; XXIII 198; XXVI 212; XLIV 38; *Par. Dem.* III 30 (ἐσσομένοιο); *D.* I 211; VI 330; XLIII 190; *Par. Dem.* IV 214 (ἱμασσομένοιο); *D.* II 300; V 16; X 404; XI 267; XIV 30; XXI 23, 54; XXII 340; XXXIV 288; XXXVII 518; XXXIX 305; XLVII 166, 734 (ἀρασσομένοιο).

the last letters of a future plural medium participle (e.g. ἱμασ]σόμενοι):³²⁷ it could have been referred to Hadrian and Antinous, but also to the men of the guard. Nothing can be said about the second word.

v. 8.] . σ ι μ ο ρ φ . . [: the line likely reported a form of the substantive μορφή (“form, shape”), already used by the poet in **F2** col. 1, v. 12 (see above).

v. 9.] [: just a few faded signs are visible from the last line. It is not possible to recognize any letter.

F 5

Source date: third century AD.

v. 1.] ι σ α δ ε ι η σ: as already stated, **F5** and **F6** belong to the same papyrus scrap (see the introduction); I separated them just to facilitate the analysis. The piece includes two columns of text: **F5** reports a few words from the former; **F6** a huge portion of the latter. While the former fragment contains only the final words of the lines (= the right margin of the column), the latter lacks them. The scrap must belong to the last section of the poem. Whether it came after **FF 3–4**, or was preceded by **F2**, is not easy to determine: it depends on the hypothesis we follow to reconstruct the structure of the poem (see above). For the first line of the **F5**, I would follow the reading of Rea:]ις ἀδείης, “fearless” (epic form of ἀδείης).³²⁸ Adding a lambda to the first letters, one could obtain λ]ίς, the epic substantive for “lion”: unfortunately, the word has a long iota, and does not fits the metric of the line.³²⁹ If not to the lion, the adjective could have referred to one of the hunters, maybe to Antinous himself.

³²⁷ Cf. Nonn. *D.* I 442.

³²⁸ Cf. 1996, 11.

³²⁹ Cf. Rea 1996, *loc. cit.*

v. 2.] ε π ι μ ο υ ν η ν: we could interpret the sequence as] ἐπὶ μούνην, “(up?/upon?) to a single...”. If so, we must hypothesize that a feminine substantive in the accusative was originally placed in the following line (enjambment).

v. 3.] . ω . [.] : the papyrus is too ruined to read anything except for an omega.

v. 4.] . [.] α ρ . . . η ρ: the line has been crossed by a rip, which has deleted the letters and ruined the ink. Just a few signs are recognizable.

v. 5.] α μ ο γ η σ α ι: Rea suggested the reading πολλὰ μογήσαι (“to suffer many pains”), noting that the optative μογήσαι could work as well.³³⁰ Livrea accepted the former hypothesis.³³¹ Both forms have textual precedents: for the aorist infinitive, one could list Theognis³³² and Apollonius of Rhodes;³³³ for the optative, the same Apollonius³³⁴ and Theocritus.³³⁵ Without the context, is not possible to identify the correct verb tense.

v. 6.] υ δ ε κ ε λ ε υ θ [.] ν: as Rea noted, “the ligature to nu rather suggests omega; the letter before that is rounded, but taller than the usual sigma” (1996, *loc. cit.*). On the basis of that, the scholar interpreted the passage as]υδε κελεύθων (i.e. the plural genitive of κέλευθος, “expedition, journey”); as a (less viable) alternative, he proposed κελεύσων, the future participle of κελεύω, “to exhort”. Some observations are necessary. As an examination of the papyrus shows, the sign following upsilon is really bigger than the usual sigma: interpreting it as a theta remains therefore the best option. If we consider also the fact that the participle κελεύσων is attested in just a single literary passage, namely in the *Anabasis* of Xenophon,³³⁶ we can

³³⁰ Cf. 1996, *loc. cit.*

³³¹ Cf. 2002, 26.

³³² Cf. 71.

³³³ Cf. IV 1585

³³⁴ Cf. II 471.

³³⁵ Cf. XXVI 28.

³³⁶ Cf. II 1, 17.

put Rea's second hypothesis aside. Concerning the first proposal, one should note that the faded ink sign taken by Rea as an omega could be identified as many other letters. The comprehension of the passage is obstructed by a hole placed between the hypothetical theta and the final ni. The reading κελεύθων is possible, but nothing prevents proposing the accusative κέλευθον instead. This hypothesis was sustained by Livrea, who interpreted the passage as follows: ἔσπε]υδε κέλευθον, "(he?) stepped up the gear".³³⁷ Such a reading is plausible: the lion hunt moves into high gear, and the hunters are reaching the animal.

v. 7.] τ ε ρ ο σ ι π ο σ: after a series of hypothetical references (e.g. **F4**, v. 6–7), the line provides the first explicit mention of a horse. The animal could easily have been involved in the narrative as the mount of the hunters. That the lion hunt was an equestrian event is confirmed by the poem of Pancrates, who describes Antinous riding a horse ἵππου] δ' Ἀδρ[ή]στοιο θοώτερον, "faster than the steed of Adrastus".³³⁸ At a first sight, the passage does not look so different: one could integrate it as θοώ]τερος ἵππος, hypothesizing the loss of a compared noun. Rea observed that "exactly the same sense is not very likely here" (1996, 11). If we look for other solutions, many possibilities are available to integrate the text.]τερος could be identified with the comparative of another adjective: an example is provided by Themistius, who writes about a ταχύ]τερος ἵππος, a "faster horse".³³⁹ Otherwise, one could turn to words such as δεύ]τερος, "second"³⁴⁰, or ἀρισ]τερός, "on the left".³⁴¹ There is, however, another option. One could interpret the text as a reference to Pegasus, the ὑπόπτερος ἵππος ("winged horse") of [Palaeph.] *De Incr.* 28. The poet could have compared Antinous attacking the lion to Bellerophon assaulting the Chimera.³⁴² This kind of comparison is not foreign to the style of the poem: the references of **F6** to Narcissus, Hyacinthus, and Adonis demonstrate it (see below).

³³⁷ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.*

³³⁸ Cf. *P. Oxy.* VIII 1085 II 1.

³³⁹ Cf. *Par. Arist. Phys.* 5, 2 185.

³⁴⁰ Cf. *Man. Pal. Ep.* 43, 13: δεύτερος ἵππος.

³⁴¹ Cf. *Schol. Vet. in Il.* XXIII 339, 5: ὁ ἀριστερός ἵππος.

³⁴² Cf. *Hom. Il.* VI 155–203. Further information in Scheer 1997.

v. 8.] . θ α λ ε ο ν τ ο σ: according to Parsons, the sequence could be interpreted as θαλέοντος (from θαλέω = θάλλω, “to bloom, to thrive”), or ε]ύθαλεοντος (from εύθαλέω = θαλέω). The latter alternative, in particular, finds parallels in Nicander³⁴³ and Quintus of Smyrna.³⁴⁴ Rea, who reported the suggestions, defined it “remoter in this context” (1996, *loc. cit.*), highlighting also paleographic difficulties (“upsilon should have left traces higher than the low specks that remain”). The reading] . θ α λ έοντος (“... of the lion”) does not raise problems of this kind, and perfectly fits the context. The scholar based on it his second hypothesis of reconstruction (cf. **F2**). As already said, the proposal is not impossible, but the reference to the lion in both **F2** and **F5** is not enough to validate it.

v. 9.] ξ ρ α υ ν α ν: no attested word fits the sequence. Rea connected it to the verb έραυνάω (“to seek, to search for”), considering a link to the substantive κεραυνός (“thunderbolt”) a less reliable alternative.³⁴⁵ If we followed this hypothesis, we could interpret the text as a present infinitive (= έραυνᾶν).³⁴⁶ Such a form is not attested: literary sources report only the more common έρευνᾶν. It is true, as Rea noted, that the ε-form “would be expected in verse or even good prose” (1996, *loc. cit.*): it must be noted, though, that the root έραυν- is frequently attested in Egyptian papyri of the imperial age. One could link the passage to the same phenomenon. Still, another (stylistic) remark is necessary. έραυνάω is used only by Biblical texts³⁴⁷ and Christian commentaries;³⁴⁸ no epic poet utilizes it. Circumstances are not better for the more frequent έρευνάω: authors such as Apollonius, Oppian, Quintus, and Nonnus never use it. These elements do not make the hypothesis of Rea implausible, but should encourage us not to exclude different possibilities.

³⁴³ Cf. F 74, 16 Gow-Scholfield.

³⁴⁴ Cf. IV 423.

³⁴⁵ Cf. 1996, *loc. cit.*

³⁴⁶ See, for instance, *P. Oxy.* II 294, 9; XIV 1651; *P. Fay.* 104. Cf. *LSJ*, 681.

³⁴⁷ Cf. *LXX Dt.* 13, 15; *John*, 5, 39; 7, 52; 8, 27; *1Corint.* 2, 10; *1Pt.* 1, 11; *Ap.* 2, 23. The verb is used also in *Prot. Jac.* 39, 16.

³⁴⁸ Cf. *Orig. Comm. Joan.* XIX 17, 107; *John Crys. In Pas. Sermo* 6, 1, 3; *Did. Cae. Comm. Job* 245, 31; 315, 15; 340, 32; *Comm. Zac.* I 295; II 236; III 313; IV 121; V 100; *In Gen.* 50, 13; 195, 28.

v. 10.] θ ε ν τ α [. .] : Livrea's edition has ὀρμη]θέντα, i.e. the accusative of the passive aorist participle of ὀρμέω, "to be moored".³⁴⁹ The possible alternatives are too many to determine the correct integration of the passage, but the proposal is convincing. It involves the presence of a ship, presumably moored off the beaches of the Nile. Since the river appears at the beginning of **F6** (v. 10), its mention at the end of **F5** is not unlikely. Even the description of a ship can be easily integrated into the narrative: as the sources report, Antinous drowned during a Nilotic cruise.³⁵⁰ Although the death of the youth is not explicitly narrated by the poet (see below), the imperial ship could have been mentioned by the poem.

v. 11.] . ε λ α ω ν : Parsons proposes to interpret the sequence as] . ε λαῶν, "of (the?) men".³⁵¹ The substantive λαός is highly attested in epic poetry,³⁵² and its use in this context is not implausible. The interpretation was accepted by Livrea, who integrated the text as follows: κοίραν]ε λαῶν, "(you?) lord of men".³⁵³ The vocative would reveal the presence of a direct speech addressing one of the protagonists (in all probability, Hadrian). Another possible explanation could be a direct reference to a member of the public (the anonymous procurator of **F6**, vv. 32–33?): it must be noted, though, that such a direct address in the middle of the narrative is scarcely convincing; if we were at the end of the poem, the situation would be different.

v. 12.] υ τ η ρ α σ : Rea interpreted the sequence as ῥ]υτῆρας, "reins".³⁵⁴ He took inspiration from Pancrates' poem, who presents Antinous λαίῃ μὲν ἔχων ῥυτῆρα χαλινόν ("keeping bit and rein on the left hand").³⁵⁵ Since the verse is concluded by a spondaic ending (– –), the scholar

³⁴⁹ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.*

³⁵⁰ Cf. Cass. Dio LXIX 11, 2–3; Aur. Vict. *Caes.* XIV 6–7; *HA V* 14, 5, etc.

³⁵¹ Cf. Rea 1996, *loc. cit.*

³⁵² See, for instance, the 294 attestations in Homer, the 18 in Apollonius of Rhodes, the 120 in Quintus of Smyrna, and the 176 in Nonnus (*teste TLG*).

³⁵³ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.*

³⁵⁴ Cf. 1996, *loc. cit.*

³⁵⁵ Cf. *P. Oxy.* VIII 1085 ii 4.

suggested also another integration, that is, ἀγρε]υτῆρας, “the dogs”. The word is frequently used by Oppian to conclude his spondaic lines,³⁵⁶ and “might be appropriate here” too (1996, 12). Livrea inserted it into his edition.³⁵⁷ Both hypotheses are viable and fit the context. The second could be supported by the similarities of Oppian’s style with that of our author: they were noted by Magnelli,³⁵⁸ and emerge from the analysis of **F6** (see below). It must be highlighted, though, that a stylistic affinity does not necessarily entail the choice of the same words.

v. 13.] . δ ε π ε τ ρ [. .] : the letters of the sequence are not clear (the last two in particular). Indeed, the line is ruined by three holes, and the ink is quite faded. As Rea noted, the most plausible reading of the passage is] . δὲ πετρῶν, “but [...] of the stones”.³⁵⁹ The particle δέ could have an adversary value, but we cannot prove it. For the rest, it is not easy to integrate the stones into the narrative of the hunt: many possibilities are at our disposal, too many to solve the problem.

v. 14.] . ρ η ν : three letters are not enough to interpret the text. Its meaning is out of reach.

v. 15.] . ρ ω ν : the line is in the same condition as the preceding one.

v. 16.] δ φ ν τ ω ν : the best integration is ὁ]δώντων (“of the teeth”). As noticed by Rea, the teeth could be referred either to the lion, or to the dogs following it.³⁶⁰

vv. 17. – 42.] –] . ο ι : the last lines of the fragment are impossible to read because of the edge of the scrap. Some ink traces at the bottom of it demonstrate that the column was four lines longer than the following one. As already stated, this can demonstrate that **F6** was the last section of the poem (see above). According to Livrea, the signs concluding **F5** should not correspond to real lines, but to marginal annotations

³⁵⁶ Cf. *Hal.* III 94; V 400; *Cyn.* II 360; IV 418.

³⁵⁷ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.*

³⁵⁸ Cf. 1998, 65.

³⁵⁹ Cf. 1996, *loc. cit.*

³⁶⁰ Cf. 1996, *loc. cit.*

instead.³⁶¹ The scanty material at our disposal does not allow us to determine the effective nature of the signs. Considering them the last section of the column remains, in my opinion, the most economic explanation. Since the lion is already dead in the first verses of the following column (cf. **F6**, v. 1), one can reasonably suppose that the lost text described the fight with the animal. Its killing likely introduced an aetiological section concerning the germination of the rosy lotus (see below).

F 6

Source date: third century AD.

v. 1. εὔρε δὲ τερπομένη ζωάγριον Ἀντιν[όου]: in all likelihood, the subject of the sentence is Selene (cf. **F4**, v. 5; **F6**, v. 11). The main meaning of the verb εὐρίσκω is “to find”, but it is also possible to interpret it as “to invent”.³⁶² The lunar goddess is said to have found/created the ζωάγριον of Antinous. The following verses make it clear that the mysterious “ransom” is the rosy lotus: line 8 says that the nymphs use it to weave garlands, and lines 3–5 mention mythical heroes transformed into flowers after their death (see below). In all probability, the poet inserted an αἶτιον of the rosy lotus after the killing of the lion. The sense of the line remains ambiguous. The first problem concerns the form of the substantive. Whereas the plural ζωάγρια is normally used to indicate the “reward for life saved”,³⁶³ there is no attestation of the singular, except for an obscure passage of Plutarch reporting an oracle.³⁶⁴ To avoid the problem, one could recall the adjective ζωάγριος, -ov, but there is no noun to refer to it.³⁶⁵ A second difficulty comes from the meaning of the verse. How can we consider the flower emerging from the blood of the lion (cf. **F2**, v. 4) a ransom for Antinous’ life? As Rea noted, there are two possible explanations: a) the fragments of

³⁶¹ Cf. 1999, 69.

³⁶² Cf. *LSJ*, 729–730.

³⁶³ Cf. *LSJ*, 758.

³⁶⁴ Cf. *Arat.* 53, 3.

³⁶⁵ The use of the adjective is attested in three passages of Nonnus: cf. *D.* XXVII 304; XLVII 740; *Par.* XV 50.

Pancrates' poem suggest that, during the hunt, Hadrian saved Antinous' life;³⁶⁶ the lotus could be presented as a ζωάγριον because of that; b) the Moon itself could have created the flower to ransom the youth from mortal life.³⁶⁷ The latter hypothesis was supported by Gigli Piccardi:³⁶⁸ as she pointed out, line 11 says that Selene transformed Antinous into a star φ[αε]ῖνοτέρησιν ἐπ' ἐλπώρησι, "upon more brilliant hopes"; the expression is frequently used by late antique pagan authors to indicate the idea of life after death (see below). The use of ζωάγριον could originate from the same perspective. Some considerations are necessary. The presence of soteriological elements in our poem is hardly disputable: along with the expression of line 11, one could take lines 21–25 into account, where the messianic reign of Diocletian is glorified (see below). However, the image of the flower emerging from the lion's blood could be extraneous to this atmosphere. As it is possible to see, the lotus germinates before the death of Antinous, who is still safe and sound at line 10. This aspect differentiates his story from the examples of lines 3–5: the flowers of Narcissus, Hyacinth, and Adonis appear after the deaths of the three heroes. The first takes the place of Narcissus' body; the second reports the weeping of Apollo on its petals; the third has the same color as Adonis' blood (see below). On the contrary, the lotus germinates from the blood of Antinous' prey. It is enthusiastically presented as a "memory of the hunt" and a "brunch of victory" (cf. **F6**, v. 2), and its form recalls that of Antinous' spear (cf. v. 9). To summarize, it is more linked to the hunt of Antinous than to his death and catasterism. Such a difference could have been highlighted by the incomplete lines 6–7 (see below). If we consider the flower a result of the hunt, we can try to explain the rest of the line. The poet notes that the Moon rejoices in finding / creating the ζωάγριον: the participle τερπομένη is preceded by the adversative particle δέ. It could suggest an earlier status of sadness or anxiety, opposed to the present joy. In all probability, such a condition has been caused by the dangers of the fight: following the hunt, the goddess has been worried for the fate of her beloved; seeing the flower germinating from the blood, she understands that Antinous

³⁶⁶ Cf. Grenier 2008, 47–49.

³⁶⁷ Cf. Rea 1996, 12.

³⁶⁸ Cf. 2002, 55–56.

has won, and rejoices. In this light, I would translate the verb εὔρε as “she found” rather than “she invented”. If the flower does not ransom Antinous from mortal life, how can we interpret the reference to a ζῳάγγριον? The first possible explanation remains the former hypothesis of Rea: Hadrian saved Antinous from the lion, and the lotus witnessed it (see above). As an alternative, we could mention the suggestion of Parsons, who notes that Plutarch’s reference to the singular ζῳάγγριον “seems to mean simply a memorial or monument” (Rea 1996, 12). From this perspective, the lotus could be taken as a monument to Antinous’ hunt. There is also a third possibility. A Greek inscription uses the plural ζῳάγγρια to indicate the offerings made to Asclepius for recovering from illness.³⁶⁹ Such a use is attested also in Aelian.³⁷⁰ One could refer to a similar meaning in our text, considering the blood of the lion (and the flower germinated from it) as the offering of Antinous. The entire hunt could be considered a sacrifice, with the Lybian lion as a prestigious victim.³⁷¹ Selene herself could be the addressee of it. The roundel of Constantine’s arch representing Hadrian and Antinous sacrificing to Diana has already been mentioned (see above). Thus, the joy of the goddess would acquire a different meaning: it could be due (also?) to the offering. One can interpret the uncommon use of the singular ζῳάγγριον as an erudite choice of the poet.

v. 2. θήρης μνημοσύνην, νίκης θάλος, [: the line presents the flower of Antinous as “memory of the hunt” and “crown of the victory”.³⁷² These attributes are useful to understand the role of the rosy lotus in the narration (see above). The explicit reference to Antinous’ νίκη suggests that the youth was presented by the poet as the slayer of the lion.³⁷³ This would differentiate our text from Pancrates’ composition, which attributed the final blow to Hadrian.³⁷⁴ The verse misses the third

³⁶⁹ IG14.967a5. Cf. *LSJ*, 758.

³⁷⁰ Cf. *NA* XI 31.

³⁷¹ The idea of a sacrifice fits also the other possible interpretations: if we take the soteriological hypothesis into account, we could say that the ritual killing of the lion guarantees the immortality to Antinous.

³⁷² Here θάλος = θάλλος; cf. Rea 1996, *loc. cit.*

³⁷³ Cf. Grenier 2008, 52.

³⁷⁴ Cf. *Ath. Deipn.* XV 77d–f.

element of the triad: as Rea hypothesized, it either evoked the lotus like the other two, or specified it.³⁷⁵ Since the last sign of the sequence looks like an epsilon, the scholar suggested the integration $\xi[\psi\chi\rho\sigma\omicron\nu\ \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\omicron\varsigma$, “well-colored flower”. It is possible, although the expression is not attested anywhere else. In his edition, Livrea proposed two different edits: $\delta[\rho\mu\omicron\nu\ \acute{\epsilon}\rho\omega\tau\omega\nu$ (“anchorage of Loves”) and $\xi[\rho\nu\omicron\varsigma\ \acute{\epsilon}\rho\omega\tau\omega\nu$ (“offshoot of Loves”).³⁷⁶ The former alternative implies that the last letter of the verse is an omicron: this is not impossible, the letter being too ruined to be clearly deciphered. The expression $\delta\rho\mu\omicron\nu\ \acute{\epsilon}\rho\omega\tau\omega\nu$ has been used by Nonnus to celebrate the city of Berytus.³⁷⁷ Such a different context makes its presence in our line quite implausible. The latter possibility is attested in the Orphic hymns,³⁷⁸ and (again) in Nonnus:³⁷⁹ in both cases, it is attributed to a (beautiful) figure strictly connected with greenery (Adonis in the former text, Ampelus in the latter).³⁸⁰ Its choice is therefore more plausible.³⁸¹

v. 3. αἰδέομαι, Νάρκισσε, τεὴν σκιοειδέα μ[ορφήν: given the public performance of the poem (see below), we can suppose that the first person singular of αἰδέομαι refers either to the actor reading the poem, or to the choir doing it. The most immediate translation of the verb would be “to be ashamed”, but a rendering “to have piety” fits the context in a better way.³⁸² Rea translated the passage “I revere, Narcissus, etc.” (1996, 9). His integration σκιοειδέα μ[ορφήν (“shadowy figure/form”) finds parallels in Nonnus,³⁸³ and is highly plausible. Livrea accepted it too, highlighting that the expression αἰδέομαι [...] μ[ορφήν

³⁷⁵ Cf. 1996, *loc. cit.*

³⁷⁶ Cf. 2002, 30.

³⁷⁷ Cf. *D.* XLI 14.

³⁷⁸ Cf. 57, 8.

³⁷⁹ Cf. *D.* X 178.

³⁸⁰ Cf. Gigli Piccardi 2003, 701.

³⁸¹ Livrea himself seemed to prefer it: he inserted it into his edited text, whereas the other was relegated to the critical apparatus: cf. 2002, 26, 30.

³⁸² Cf. *LSJ*, 35–36.

³⁸³ Cf. *D.* XXIX 327, XL 441, XLIII 242. Particularly interesting is the reference of *D.* XLVIII 586 (σκιοειδέα φάσματα μορφῆς, «shadowy reflections of the figure»), which the poet attributes to Narcissus: cf. Rea 1996, 12.

finds a parallel in Nonnus.³⁸⁴ Our line makes reference to the myth of Narcissus, the beautiful youth who fell in love with his own reflection (the σκιοειδέα μ[ορφὴν of our passage) and died of consumption.³⁸⁵ When Naiads and Dryads tried to bury his body, they just found the homonymous flower.³⁸⁶ The poet quotes the myth as a parallel to Antinous' end.³⁸⁷

v. 4. δακρυχέω δ' Ὑάκινθον ἀπηνέα δίσκ[ον: the second mythical parallel evoked by the poet is Hyacinthus, beloved of the god Apollo and accidentally killed by him. To commemorate the youth and express his pain, the god made a flower germinate from the corpse, and wrote on its petals the letters AI AI.³⁸⁸ The opening of the line is particularly interesting: the verb δακρυχέω, "I bewail", has been considered an invention of Nonnus, based on the Homeric expression δάκρυ χέων, "shedding tears".³⁸⁹ The presence of the verb in an earlier text reveals, however, that the expression δακρυχέειν was already used (in late antique Egypt at least). Once again, a proof that Nonnus' art did not appear in a vacuum, but collected and summarized the cultural elements of his age.³⁹⁰ The core of the line is occupied by two accusatives, i.e. Ὑάκινθον and ἀπηνέα δίσκ[ον.³⁹¹ Linking both them to δακρυχέω hardly works: the line must have included another verb. Two possibilities are at our disposal: a) a participle linked to Ὑάκινθον and

³⁸⁴ Cf. *D. XI* 458: οὐκ ἠδέσσατο μορφὴν, «(it) did not respect the beauty»; cf. Livrea 1999, 70; 2002, 26.

³⁸⁵ Cf. *P. Oxy. LXIX* 4711; Hyg. 271; Ov. *Met. III* 339–509; Paus. IX 31, 7–8; Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 186.

³⁸⁶ Cf. Ov. *Met. III* 505–510. According to other sources (e.g. Conon: cf. Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 186, 134b, 28–135a, 4), the flower germinated from the blood of Narcissus after he pierced himself.

³⁸⁷ A similar comparison between the flower of Antinous and those of earlier mythical heroes is made also by Pancrates (cf. Athen. *Deipn.* XV 21; see Grenier 2008, 51). Another proof of the importance his work had in defining an «official version» of Antinous' end (cf. **F2**, v. 4).

³⁸⁸ Cf. Ov. *Met. X* 162–219; [Ap.] III 10, 3; Paus. III 1, 3; 19, 4.

³⁸⁹ Cf. *LSJ*, 367.

³⁹⁰ Cf. Miguélez Cavero 2008, 22–25. See also Simelidis 2016.

³⁹¹ The accusative ἀπηνέα goes along with δίσκ[ον: taking it as a neuter plural used as an adverb «seems too desperate, and not immediately helpful» (Rea 1996, *loc. cit.*).

governing ἀπηνέα δίσκ[ον; b) an infinitive having one of the accusatives as a subject, and the other as an object. The former solution was proposed by Rea: as he wrote, “a truly appropriate participle is hard to find; he (= Hyacinthus) was not ‘grasping’ the discus which killed him, but might be imagined as taking part in a contest along with Apollo, so ἐλόντα is the stopgap for the translation” (1996, *loc. cit.*). The latter hypothesis was sustained by Livrea, who integrated the text as follows: δακρυχέω δ’ Ὑάκινθον ἀπηνέα δίσκ[ον ὀλέσσαι.³⁹² In the former case, we could translate the text as “I bewail Hyacinthus, who took/grasped the cruel discus”; in the latter, “I bewail that the cruel discus killed/destroyed Hyacinthus”. Both solutions are possible. However, while the structure δακρυχέω + accusative + infinitive is not attested in any Greek text, Rea’s hypothesis finds a parallel in Nonnus’ *Paraphrase*: ὥς ἔτι δακρυχέεσκε λάλον νέκυν ἐγγὺς ἐόντα, “while she still cried for a speaking dead who was near”.³⁹³

v. 5. σὴν δὲ κατο[ι]κτεῖρω θηραγρεσίην, α[: after Narcissus and Hyacinthus, the poet invokes Adonis, the lover of Aphrodite killed by a boar during a hunt. The goddess sprinkled his blood with nectar and made the anemone spring forth.³⁹⁴ The portion of text naming the youth fell, but his identification is made possible by the reference to a hunt: the substantive θηραγρεσίη is not attested, but its structure – as Rea noted – “is regularly formed” (1996, *loc. cit.*). For the last section of the line, scholars have proposed different integrations. As Rea noticed, the most basic (i.e. Ἀδωνι) is not possible: the first letter of the name is short, and goes against the metric of the line.³⁹⁵ Since the presence of an alpha makes an attested solution such as φ[ίλ’ Ἀδωνι (“dear Adonis”) impossible,³⁹⁶ the scholar proposed the obliquus integration ἄ[να Βύβλου, “lord of Byblos”.³⁹⁷ Livrea suggested ἀ[βρὲ κοῦρε (“graceful

³⁹² Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.*

³⁹³ Cf. XX 52.

³⁹⁴ Cf. *Schol. Theocr.* I 107; *Hyg. Fab.* 58, 164; *Ov. Met.* X 519–741.

³⁹⁵ It should be long, so to close the spondee started with the final vocal of θηραγρεσίην.

³⁹⁶ See, for instance, *AP* V 53, 1.

³⁹⁷ Cf. 1996, *loc. cit.*

youth”) instead.³⁹⁸ Both hypotheses are plausible, even if they are not attested³⁹⁹. The mention of Adonis concludes the list of mythical parallels. An overall view of the three lines reveals their structural unity: the first two verses are opened by a verb of suffering (αἰδέομαι, δακρυχέω), followed by the name of the protagonist (Νάρκισσε, Ὑάκινθον); to conclude the sequence, the third line varies this structure, moving the verb κατοικτεῖρω after the possessive pronoun σὴν and the reference to Adonis to the end of the line. Another interesting element of the section concerns the protagonists: Narcissus is addressed in the second person singular (αἰδέομαι, Νάρκισσε, τελὴν σκιοειδέα μ[ορφὴν]), whereas Hyacinthus is mentioned in the third (δακρυχέω δ’ Ὑάκινθον ἀπηνέα δίσκ[ον]). The poet returns to the second person with Adonis (σὴν δὲ κατοικ[ι]κτεῖρω θηραγρεσίην, α[]), and closes the list. *Mutatis mutandis*, one could think of a sonata form (A – B – A).

vv. 6.–7. λειμῶν δ’ Ἀντινόοιο καὶ ἡμερο[/ οὐ πηγὴν, οὐ δίσκον ὀλέθριον, οὐ . . .] : the passage is not easy to understand. The reference to the source of Narcissus, the discus of Hyacinthus, and (in all probability) the boar of Adonis supposedly aims to explicate the comparison of the preceding lines between the three characters and Antinous. As already revealed, the creation of a new flower is what the four stories have in common. It is therefore plausible that Antinous’ lotus was the central figure of the couplet. Line 6 evokes the “meadow” of the youth (λειμῶν δ’ Ἀντινόοιο): Rea suggests interpreting it as “the riverside parts of the Antinoite nomarchy where Antinous’ flower might grow, and by extension to the whole of the city’s territory” (1996, *loc. cit.*). The reference to a particular area – either of Antinopolis, or of its territory – consecrated to the youth and to his flower is quite convincing. There is no other attestation of a “meadow of Antinous” in Greek literature, but nothing rules out that the name was used by the inhabitants of Antinopolis to indicate a well-defined place. According to the obelisk of Pincius, the tomb of Antinous “is located within the

³⁹⁸ Cf. 2002, 26.

³⁹⁹ It must be noted, though, that Proclus (*H.* I 26) refers the adjective ἄβρος to Adonis. The passage does not prove Livrea’s integration, but confirms that the word could be attributed to Aphrodite’s lover: cf. Fantuzzi 1985, 118.

gardens of the domain (?) of the *princeps* [in? of?] Rome”.⁴⁰⁰ If the grave of the youth was in Antinopolis, as some scholars have suggested, the λειμῶν δ’ Ἀντινόοιο could be a reference to the “gardens” surrounding it. If the sepulcher was not in the city, we could consider a memorial.⁴⁰¹ The presence of Antinous’ flower in his sanctuary would scarcely be surprising. A more explicit reference to the rosy lotus likely occupied the final section of the verse. The sequence ἱμερῶ[could be linked to the substantive ἱμερος, “longing, desire”; as an alternative, one could think to the adjective ἱμερόεις, -εσσα, -εν (“lovely”), or to the adverb ἱμερον, “with desire”. Both Rea and Livrea opted for the second possibility: the former proposed ἱμερῶ[εν νέον ἄνθος (“the lovely new flower”) as a possible integration;⁴⁰² the latter ἱμερῶ[εν θάλος αὐτοῦ (“his new scion”).⁴⁰³ Both hypotheses are possible: that of Livrea, in particular, employs a word already used by the poet (cf. F6, v. 2). The presence of a neuter subject such as ἄνθος or θάλος, on the one hand, follows the

⁴⁰⁰ Translation of Renberg 2010, 187.

⁴⁰¹ The location of Antinous’ grave is still discussed. The inscription of the obelisk is not completely clear. As Renberg highlighted, its language is not idiomatic (it is likely that the text was originally written in Latin or Greek, and then translated into Egyptian), and a lacuna interrupts it (cf. 2010, 186–187). Salza Prina Ricotti (2002–2003; 2003–2004), and Mari-Sgalandro (2007) interpreted the testimony as a reference to Hadrian’s villa in Tivoli, while Grenier (2008, 42–44) proposed to place the sepulchral «garden» in Rome (between the *Horti Sallustiani* and the mausoleum of Hadrian). But the obelisk is not the only testimony at disposal: Epiphanius notes that the youth was buried in a vessel in Antinopolis (cf. *Anc.* 106, 9, 130), and the testimony of Clemens of Alexandria (*Protr.* IV 49, 3) goes in the same direction. In the light of these two references, and through a reinterpretation of the writing of the obelisk, Renberg compellingly argued that the body of Antinous remained in the city founded in his name (cf. 2010, 181–191). Indeed, as the founding hero of Antinopolis, the youth should have been buried there, according to the Greek tradition (cf. Kuhlmann 2002, 198). The same hypothesis was sustained by Beaujeu (1955, 254–255), Boatwright (1987, 148, 239–260), and Kessler (1994, 146–149). In the absence of specific archeological evidence, the problem must remain unsolved. It must be said, though, that my interpretation of λειμῶν δ’ Ἀντινόοιο would remain valuable even if the grave of Antinous were in Rome or Tivoli: if not to the grave, the poet could have made reference to a simple memorial.

⁴⁰² Cf. 1996, *loc. cit.*

⁴⁰³ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.*

linguistic use;⁴⁰⁴ on the other hand, it “makes it easier to envisage the restoration of a singular verb in 7” (Rea 1996, *loc. cit.*). This aspect brings us to the second line of the couplet. As already seen, it lists the objects causing the deaths of Narcissus, Hyacinthus, and Adonis. A negative οὐ is put before each of them. This choice can be interpreted in two different ways: either the poet wanted to distinguish Antinous from the others youths, or he intended to bring all of them to the same level. The latter hypothesis was supported by Rea. After taking note of the scanty signs at the end of the line, he added: “we could have οὐ σῦν [ζηλοῖ or ταρβεῖ or αὐχεῖ, “envy (or “hold in awe”, or “boast of”) not pool, not fatal discus, not boar”, i.e. the attributes of Antinous are not inferior to any of the rival cases that have been mentioned” (1996, 13).⁴⁰⁵ The former hypothesis is possible as well: we have already noted that the flower of Antinous does not appear after his death, but after the killing of the lion. We have also seen that the lotus does not germinate from the blood of Hadrian’s lover, but from that of the hunted beast (see above). Keeping these elements in mind, one could consider lines 6–7 the expression of a distinction: while the narcissus, the hyacinth, and the anemone sprang after the death of Narcissus, Hyacinthus, and Adonis, the rosy lotus did not need the death of Antinous. Moving away from the reconstruction of Rea, one could hazard a hypothetical οὐ πηγὴν, οὐ δίσκον ὀλέθριον, οὐ σῦν [φοβεῖ, “does not fear the source, the deadly discus, or the boar”. Unfortunately, such a proposal would be *contra metrum*. A similar solution is provided by Livrea: οὐ πηγὴν, οὐ δίσκον ὀλέθριον, οὐ φύγ ’ [ὀδόντα, “does not escape from the source, the deadly discus, or the fang”.⁴⁰⁶ As an alternative, the scholar proposed the integration οὐ πηγὴν, οὐ δίσκον ὀλέθριον, οὐ μεθ[έπει σῦν (“does not pursue the source, the deadly discus, the boar”). In the absence of further information, a definitive solution cannot be found.⁴⁰⁷

⁴⁰⁴ The adjective ἴμερος is attested only in the neuter: cf. *LSJ*, 830.

⁴⁰⁵ As an alternative to σῦν, Rea proposes κάπρον. In doing so, he notes that the noun should be placed at the end of the line because of metrics; that would create an empty space of one (—) or two syllables (UU), which would be quite difficult to fill (cf. 1996, *loc. cit.*).

⁴⁰⁶ Cf. 1999, 72; 2002, *loc. cit.*

⁴⁰⁷ A similar use of negative comparisons can be found in *P. Mil. Vogliano* I 20, col. II 15–25: cf. Livrea 1999, 70, n. 11.

v. 8. τῷ δὲ μετ' Ἀντίνοον νύμφαι σ[τέ]φον ἄνθεϊ π[] : the line reports the first explicit reference to the ἄνθος of Antinous. The nymphs are said to have created a garland with it, but for whom they have prepared it is not immediately clear. The meaning of the sentence depends indeed on the interpretation of μετ' Ἀντίνοον. Rea linked the words to the flower and translated them as “named after Antinous” (1996, 9). On the basis of that, he integrated the line as follows: τῷ δὲ μετ' Ἀντίνοον νύμφαι σ[τέ]φον ἄνθεϊ π[λοχμούς, “the nymphs (began to crown their tresses?) with the flower named after Antinous” (1996, 8; translation from p. 9). The image of nymphs crowning themselves with garlands of flowers is not unusual: yet, the use of μετά + accusative to indicate the origin of something has no parallels.⁴⁰⁸ Delving into the problem, Magnelli proposed a different interpretation of the passage: he considered the accusative Ἀντίνοον the object of σ[τέ]φον, suggesting that the nymphs do not crown themselves with lotus, but the victorious hunter.⁴⁰⁹ This first coronation should anticipate the second one, made by the Moon in line 13 (see below). In light of that, the final lacuna must be integrated in a different way: the scholar suggested the dative π[λεκτῷ, “plaited”, as a possible solution. Such a use of the adjective is attested in other passages of Greek literature.⁴¹⁰ Problems arise when dealing with the preposition μετά: once the connection with Ἀντίνοον is broken, how should it be interpreted? Magnelli cautiously hypothesized the text to be corrupted: τῷ δὲ μετ' should be corrected in τῷδε μέν. The passage from the latter form to the former would be due to a phonetic confusion: as a confirmation, the scholar pointed out the phonetic mistakes of lines 31–32.⁴¹¹ This hypothesis of Magnelli lays itself open to criticism, and he was aware of this. As he admitted, the reliability of the reconstruction depends on the role of *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352: if it were the original text,

⁴⁰⁸ Cf. Magnelli 1998, 63–64.

⁴⁰⁹ Cf. 1998, 63.

⁴¹⁰ Magnelli quoted Aeschylus (*Pers.* 618); Alcman (F 362, 2 Voigt); Anacreon (PMG 397); Clemens of Alexandria (*Paed.* II 8, 73, 4); Euripides (*Hypp.* 73, 806–807); Sappho (F 94, 15–17 Voigt); Xenophon (FF 1–2 West).

⁴¹¹ Cf. 1998, 64.

hypothesizing a corruption would be quite disputable.⁴¹² Two further remarks are necessary. First, it is true that lines 31–32 present a couple of mistakes, but their nature is different and – more importantly – they have already been corrected by the writer (see below). Second, the reading τῷδε μὲν would create an isolated μὲν–proposition, without any δέ balancing it: such a structure “non si raccomanda”.⁴¹³ A different explanation was provided by Livrea, who considered the unusual μετ’ Ἀντίνοον a “predecessore del tipico pregnante μετὰ + accusativo in Nonno” (1999, 71) and attributed a temporal value to it (= “after Antinous”).⁴¹⁴ Along with Magnelli’s interpretation, the scholar challenged Rea’s, pointing out that, if the nymphs were adorning their hair with lotus garlands, the verb should be middle–passive.⁴¹⁵ Given the active form, he eliminated any reference to the recipients of the wreaths, and proposed the integration π[υρσῶ, “purple”.⁴¹⁶ Therefore, the line should be translated as “after (the deeds of) Antinous, Nymphs make crowns with this purple flower”. Livrea’s reading of μετ’ Ἀντίνοον is convincing: it is based on an attested use (unlike Rea’s hypothesis) and it does not require changes in the text (unlike Magnelli’s proposal). Less convincing is the absolute use of the verb στέφω, which is normally accompanied by a direct object.⁴¹⁷

v. 9. εἰσέ[τι] ῥυομένω θαλερὴν θηρ[ήτο]ρος αἰχμή[ν]: the verse closes the αἴτιον of Antinous’ flower. It does not make any reference to the death of the youth: it just mentions the tip of his spear. This could be another proof that the germination of the lotus was not linked to the drowning of Hadrian’s lover, but to his heroic deed in the hunt. The

⁴¹² Cf. 1998, *loc. cit.*: «Ovviamente si tratta di un’ipotesi, il cui grado di probabilità è legato all’interpretazione della natura stessa del papiro, a seconda che lo si ritenga l’esemplare stesso su cui fu condotta la recitazione o una copia successiva (va da sé che nel primo caso sarebbe più azzardato correggere): mi basterebbe che questa proposta servisse almeno come uno stimolo a ripensare il testo».

⁴¹³ Cf. Livrea 1999, 71, n. 13.

⁴¹⁴ Cf. Keydell 1959, 66. The possibility was mentioned by Magnelli (1998, 63, n. 10) too, who preferred a different solution.

⁴¹⁵ Cf. Livrea 1999, *loc. cit.*

⁴¹⁶ Cf. Mosc. *Eur.* 70.

⁴¹⁷ Cf. *LSJ*, 1643

image of the flower reproducing Antinous' weapon is not attested anywhere else; yet, it is not impossible.⁴¹⁸ The genitive of θηρήτωρ (epic form of θηράτωρ, "hunter") connects the aetiological section to the following narration (see below).

v. 10. ἐς Νεῖλον δ' ἔσπευσε λεόντεον αἷμα καθῆραι: Magnelli wrote that the passage from line 9 to line 10 is quite abrupt, noting also that the second verse is without an explicit subject.⁴¹⁹ His plan to consider the Ἀντίνοον of line 8 the object of σ[τέ]φον should be a solution to these problems.⁴²⁰ It must be noted, though, that the situation of the passage, such as it is, is not so problematic. The connection between the αἷτιον of the lotus and the narration of Antinous' catasterism is provided by the θηρ[ήτο]ρος of line 9: the hunter, whose spear is reproduced by the lotus, is the protagonist (and – from a grammatical viewpoint – the implicit subject) of line 10. Antinous is said to hurry to the Nile to wash off the blood of the lion. Since the lion hunt took place near Alexandria⁴²¹ and the drowning of Antinous near Hermopolis, Rea observed that the youth "could not be imagined as literally washing the lion's blood off" (1996, 13): one should rather think of a purification. Such an interpretation risks being – as the scholar himself pointed out – "needlessly scrupulous" (1996, *loc. cit.*). For what we can see from the surviving lines, the poet did not aim to provide a precise narration of the events: that is confirmed by the vague description of Antinous' death (cf. vv. 11–13). The long distance between the Lybian desert and the Thebaid could have been "artistically" shortened, in order to improve the rhythm of the work. Anyway, it is true that the verb καθάίρω has a double meaning, not only the basic "to cleanse", but also the religious "to purify".⁴²² Nothing excludes the poet from having both senses in mind while writing his text: as already said, some passages of it reveal a certain soteriological atmosphere (cf. vv. 1, 11, 21–25). The reference to

⁴¹⁸ Cf. Rea 1996, 13.

⁴¹⁹ Cf. 1998, 63.

⁴²⁰ Cf. 1998, *loc. cit.*: «un Antinoo complemento oggetto, quindi di maggior peso semantico all'interno della frase, renderebbe forse meno pesante l'omissione del soggetto al v. 10 e meno brusco il passaggio tra i due periodi».

⁴²¹ Cf. Athen. *Deipn.* XV 677e.

⁴²² Cf. *LSJ*, 849.

a purification would have not been out of context. Furthermore, a purifying washing was one of the rites preceding ancient weddings:⁴²³ if we take into account the verses describing Antinous' divine marriage with the Moon (cf. vv. 12–14), the reference to the Nile and to a washing acquires a clearer meaning.

v. 11. ἡ δὲ φ[αε]ινοτέρησιν ἐπ' ἐλπωρῇσι Σελήνῃ: once again the Moon returns to the scene, enclosing the whole line with her name (ἡ δὲ φ[αε]ινοτέρησιν ἐπ' ἐλπωρῇσι Σελήνῃ). For the sequence φ[αε]ινοτέρησιν ἐπ' ἐλπωρῇσι, Livrea⁴²⁴ and Gigli Piccardi⁴²⁵ highlighted its soteriological nature: as a series of parallels demonstrates, the reference to future or brilliant hopes mostly expresses “le aspettative di una vita dopo la morte”.⁴²⁶ On this basis, the scholars linked the verse to the beginning of the fragments, where the rosy lotus is presented as a ransom of Antinous (see above). Regardless of the link with the ζωάγριον of line 1, the soteriological color of the scene is hardly deniable. The moment of the catasterism is forthcoming and line 11 anticipates it. As the reading of this and the following verses demonstrate, the poet does not make any explicit reference to Antinous' death: he just says that the youth hurried to the Nile and was kidnapped by the lunar goddess. There is a sort of reluctance to depict the drowning. Given its status as model, one can suppose that Pancrates' poem had a similar approach.⁴²⁷ Exposing such an unpleasant episode in detail was not the best option for either of the two authors: in the former case, because of the presence of Hadrian, who listened to the lines and rewarded their author with admittance to the Museum;⁴²⁸ in the latter, for the celebratory context of the poetic performance. It must be noted, though, that the same prudery is shown by other sources reporting the story: the obelisk of Pincius, for instance, briefly notes that

⁴²³ Cf. Calame 1983, XVII–XVIII.

⁴²⁴ Cf. 1999, 71.

⁴²⁵ Cf. 2002, 55.

⁴²⁶ Cf. *Jul. Or.* VIII 180c; *Claud. Gig. Gr.* 10; *Pampr.* F 3, 153 Livrea; *Nonn. D.* VII 351; IX 84; XLVI 363. For further references, see Gigli Piccardi 2002, 55, n. 3. The expression was used in the Eleusinian mysteries: cf. Livrea 1999, 71, n. 16.

⁴²⁷ Cf. Grenier 2008, 53–54.

⁴²⁸ Cf. *Athen.* XV 77d–f.

Antinous' death was stated by the gods without further information.⁴²⁹ The silence surrounding the fatal cruise on the Nile already looked suspicious to the contemporaries of Hadrian, who started proposing alternative explanations for Antinous' drowning.⁴³⁰

v. 12. κέκλετο μαρμαίρειν θαλαμ[η]πόλον άστερ . [: the sense of the line is not easy to determine. Along with the following verse, it describes the catasterism of Antinous, but the description of the process is stripped down. The subject of the sentence is clearly the Moon, who orders something or someone to sparkle (κέκλετο μαρμαίρειν). The addressee of the order is not immediately clear, the identification resting on the interpretation of the last two words of the line. The substantive θαλαμηπόλος, both masculine and feminine, normally indicates the attendant to a bedroom (e.g. a maid, an eunuch), but can also be applied to a bridegroom.⁴³¹ This undetermined figure is the one receiving the order to shine: the final word of the line (άστερ .) reveals that they have something to do with a star. Since the passage presents Antinous' catasterism, identifying the youth with Selene's θαλαμηπόλος would be the most immediate interpretation. As Rea noted, what follows the rho of άστερ . seems to be either an alpha, or an omicron.⁴³² One just has to take the word as the accusative of άστήρ (= άστέρα), and *les jeux sont faits*: the Moon orders her attendant / bridegroom (= Antinous) to shine as a star.⁴³³ Different solutions can be proposed to conclude the verse: Livrea's edition has άστέρα [νύκτος, "star of the night";⁴³⁴ Rea suggested άστέρα [έαυτης, "her star";⁴³⁵ Parsons άστέρα [Μήνης, "star

⁴²⁹ Cf. Grenier 2008, 49.

⁴³⁰ Cf. Cass. Dio LXIX 11, 2–3; Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 14, 6–7; *HA Hadr.* XIV 5. Cf. Grenier 2008, 49–50; Lambert 1984, 130–141; Vout 2007, 57.

⁴³¹ Cf. *LSJ*, 781.

⁴³² Cf. 1996, 14.

⁴³³ This is the solution of Grenier (2008, 52), who translated the line as «le promu à un rang où il brilla comme un aster époux».

⁴³⁴ Cf. 2002, 26.

⁴³⁵ Cf. 1996, *loc. cit.* As Rea noted, one could also propose the reading άστέρ' έ[αυτης: the papyrus does not report any trace of apostrophe, but it does the same thing at line 8 (μετ' Αντίνοον). NB: the έαυτης could also be referred to θαλαμ[η]πόλον: in this case, the line should be translated as «she ordered to her bridegroom to shine as a star».

of the Moon”.⁴³⁶ It must be noted, though, that other integrations are possible as well: instead of a noun, the sequence ἄστερ . could be interpreted as an adjective related to the stars. The same Rea proposed ἄστερό[εντα (“starry”),⁴³⁷ ἄστερό[φοιτον (“traversing the stars”),⁴³⁸ and ἄστερο[φεγγῇ (“shining with stars”)]⁴³⁹ as “a better line of possibilities” (1996, *loc. cit.*). In his translation of the fragment, he cautiously opted for the last adjective.⁴⁴⁰ When facing all these alternatives, some considerations are necessary. The use of θαλαμηπόλος as “bridegroom” is extremely rare: as the *LSJ* shows, it is attested only in a passage of Sophocles,⁴⁴¹ which seems to be the exception rather than the rule. In most cases, the substantive indicates the attendant, be it a male or a female. In all probability, the same sense is involved here: an endorsement of that is provided by Nonnus, who uses θαλαμηπόλος twenty-six times in his poems, never referring to a bridegroom.⁴⁴² The presence of a verb such as κέλομαι, “to command, to order”, leads us in the same direction. One could expect a sweeter tone from a goddess in love, in spite of the mortal nature of her lover. The presentation of Antinous as the attendant of the Moon is scarcely plausible, above all in a poem performed in Antinopolis. The servant of Selene should be identified with someone else. This point brings us to Gigli Piccardi’s hypothesis.⁴⁴³ The scholar noted that, at various times, Nonnus presents atmospheric phenomena such as servers at divine weddings.⁴⁴⁴ She suggested attributing a similar meaning to our passage: the attendant of the Moon is not Antinous, but another star; in order to greet the youth,

⁴³⁶ Cf. Rea 1996, *loc. cit.* In this case as well, the genitive Μήνης can be linked to θαλαμ[η]πόλον too (see the preceding note).

⁴³⁷ See, for instance, Hom. *Il.* XV 371; XVI 134; XVIII 370; XIX 128; *Od.* IX 527; XI 17; XII 280.

⁴³⁸ Cf. Nonn. *D. pr.* I, 3; II 262; VIII 98; XXIII 298; XXV 449; XXXII 10; XXXVIII 265; XLIV 173; XLVII 251, 701.

⁴³⁹ Cf. *Orph. H.* III 3; V 5.

⁴⁴⁰ Cf. 1996, 9.

⁴⁴¹ *OT* 1210.

⁴⁴² See, for instance, Nonn. *D.* I 3; II 585; III 84; IV 162; V 108, 575; VII 307; IX 100; XVI 94, 122, 296; XVIII 367; XXVI 206; XXVII 32; XXXI 186; XXXV 174; XXXVIII 136; XLII 477, 485; XLIII 4, 105, 387; XLVII 390; XLVIII 19, 752; *Par.* II 2.

⁴⁴³ Cf. 2002, 56–57.

⁴⁴⁴ Cf. *D.* I 3; XXXVIII 136; *Par.* II 1–2.

the goddess orders her to light up the place of their future union. The preparation of the nuptial bed before a theogamy is a literary *topos*.⁴⁴⁵ To integrate the final section of the line, Gigli Piccardi proposed the adjective ἀστερό[εσσον, “sparkling like a star”. Nonnus frequently uses it, often to indicate a constellation.⁴⁴⁶ The hypothesis is convincing: the idea of a group of stars crowning Antinous finds confirmation in the following line (see below).

v. 13. κύκλω δὲ στέψασα νέον φάος ἔσχ[ε]ν ἀκ[οίτην: in his analysis of the passage, Rea noticed that “it is not clear what is meant by the circle with which the Moon crowned the new star” (1996, 14). The interpretation of Gigli Piccardi provided a good explanation for that (see above). Selene convenes the stars of a constellation to prepare for her union with Antinous. When the νέον φάος (“new light”) arrives, she places the stars around him as a crown and takes him for her husband. Rea’s integration ἔσχ[ε]ν ἀκ[οίτην (“took for a husband”) is highly plausible and was accepted by all the scholars dealing with the papyrus.⁴⁴⁷ The image of Antinous being crowned by the starry attendants of line 12 fits the information of the sources. Cassius Dio says that, after the death of the youth, Hadrian claimed to have discovered a new star, taking it as a sign of his lover’s divine status.⁴⁴⁸ Yet, while dealing with Antinous’ catasterism, Ptolemy seems to speak of an entire constellation, placed below that of the Aquila.⁴⁴⁹ Our poet could have unified the two representations, identifying Hadrian’s new star with

⁴⁴⁵ For the first attestation, see the theogamy of Zeus and Hera in Hom. *Il.* XIV 343–345.

⁴⁴⁶ Cf. *D.* I 452–453, 460; XVI 201; XLI 228; XLVII 451; cf. Gigli Piccardi 2002, 57.

⁴⁴⁷ Cf. Rea 1996, 14–15, who listed as parallels of the passage Hes. *Theog.* 608, and Nonn. *D.* VIII 332; XLIV 311. See also Magnelli 1998, 63; Livrea 2002, *loc. cit.*; Gigli Piccardi 2002, 57, n. 11.

⁴⁴⁸ Cf. LXIX 11, 4. It is hard to state whether Hadrian’s star was real, or not: cf. Rea 1996, 14.

⁴⁴⁹ Cf. *Synt.* VII 5: for the analysis of the passage and its problems, see Heiberg 1903, 74. Antinous’ constellation was taken by great astronomers such as Caspar Vopel or Tycho Brahe as a real one. Their maps of sky include it. Its status was afterwards declassified to that of an asterism (i.e. a pattern of star belonging to another constellation, or unifying members of different star clusters). Finally, it was removed by the official lists in 1930. See Fasching 1993, 69.

Antinous' φάος and the other components of the cluster with the garland of the Moon.

v. 14. δῶρον δ' Ἀδρια[ν]οῖο πόλι[ς], Νεῖλοι[ο] δὲ νῆ[σος]: the city of Antinopolis – founded by Hadrian on the 30th October 130 AD on the east bank of the Nile⁴⁵⁰ – is presented by the poet as a present of the emperor (δῶρον δ' Ἀδρια[ν]οῖο). Another gift – an island (νῆ[σον]) – is offered by the Nile. Before analyzing the meaning of the line, a couple of remarks are necessary. The first involves the name of the emperor. From the metrical point of view, the mention of Hadrian is particularly interesting: the Latin *Hadriānus* should correspond to the Greek Ἀδριᾶνός. Since, however, Ἀδριᾶνοιο does not fit the metric of the line, the poet has distorted it, either shortening the long alpha (= Ἀδριᾶνοιο), or using the preceding iota as a semi-vowel (= Ἀδριᾶνοιο).⁴⁵¹ This metrical distortion of Hadrian's name is not uncommon⁴⁵². The second remark concerns the conclusion of the line: the integration νῆ[σος] was proposed by Rea. He rightly pointed out that the ἡ μὲν of the following line implies a feminine substantive, noting also that the adjective ἐριστάφυλος ("rich in grapes") suits the representation of an island.⁴⁵³ The mention of δῶρα perfectly matches with the narrative context: the Moon and Antinous have celebrated their union and Hadrian and the Nile offer wedding presents to them.⁴⁵⁴ The image of the emperor offering a gift to his former lover reflects the Hellenic idea of pederasty (παιδεραστιά). Indeed, the relationship between a mature man (ἐραστής) and a boy (ἐρώμενος) was intended to introduce the latter to adult life, i.e. to a heterosexual marriage.⁴⁵⁵ In this light, Antinous' passage from mortal life to immortality could be seen as an analogous process, resulting in Hadrian's farewell and ratified by the wedding with Selene. Along with the emperor, the poet also mentions the Nile,

⁴⁵⁰ Cf. Bell 1940, 133–135; Grenier 2008, 57–58.

⁴⁵¹ The same use of iota as a semi-vowel is attested in v. 20 (see below).

⁴⁵² Cf. Rea 1996, 15. The scholar records that Parsons cautiously opts for the second alternative (on the base of West 1982, 14).

⁴⁵³ Cf. 1996, *loc. cit.*

⁴⁵⁴ Cf. Grenier 2008, 53–55.

⁴⁵⁵ The myth represents Poseidon while providing gifts to his former lover Pelops, when the latter needs help to conquer Ippodamia: cf. Calame 1983, 77.

attributing the offer of an island to it. If the city of Hadrian is easy to identify, the recognition of the νῆ[σος is far more complicate. As noted by Grenier, “dans le grec d’Égypte, le mot désigne [...] une terre baignée par le Nil” (2008, 54):⁴⁵⁶ therefore, as Rea pointed out, “there is no need to suppose that this νῆσος was even in the second or in the third century AD what we should term an island” (1996, 15); the poet could have just referred to a new ground brought into cultivation after the death of Antinous. In his commentary on the passage, the scholar quoted *P. Hamb. I 23*, a papyrus of the sixth century mentioning a vineyard [ἐ]ν τῇ κάτω π . . . νήσῳ πόλεως Ἀντινόου, “downwards, in the (island?) of Antinous’ city” (v. 21). Such a reference goes along with our fragment: line 15 defines the gift of the Nile as “rich in grapes” (see below). As a possible identification, Rea proposed Sheiba Island (*Gezîret Sheiba*), i.e. an area of alluvial land placed in front of the modern village of *Qalandul* (north of the area of Antinopolis).⁴⁵⁷ A different interpretation was provided by Livrea, who identified the mysterious island with Hermopolis Magna: the Egyptian city was traditionally considered the “blaze island”, i.e. the area on earth which had received the first light of the sun.⁴⁵⁸ Gigli Piccardi supported this hypothesis, and interpreted the following lines in that light (see below). In his study on Antinous’ death, Grenier developed the idea, identifying the gift with the entire nome of Hermopolis.⁴⁵⁹ According to the scholar, the Nile does not give its present to Antinous, but to his wife Selene: as he notes, “le nome Hermopolite étant depuis toujours le domaine du Thot lunaire indigène, seule Séléné, par nature, pouvait avoir quelque lien avec ce territoire et prétendre à le recevoir en cadeau de noces” (2008, 55). All these interpretations have an element in common: they read lines 14–17 as an attempt to disparage Hermopolis, i.e. the most important center of the region. In spite of the privileges Hadrian had given to it (for instance, the right of ἐπιγαμία, i.e. the possibility of intermarriage with Egyptians),⁴⁶⁰

⁴⁵⁶ See also Drew–Bear 1979, 43.

⁴⁵⁷ As the website *GeoName.org* shows:

<http://www.geonames.org/349282/jazirat%20shaybah.html>.

⁴⁵⁸ Cf. 2002, 20. See Gigli Piccardi 1990, 21 (cf. n. 4).

⁴⁵⁹ Cf. 2008, 54–55.

⁴⁶⁰ Such a practice was not allowed in cities such as Ptolemais: cf. Bell 1940, 141–142. The same article lists other rights of Antinopolis: e.g. the exemption

the city of Antinous remained under the jurisdiction of Hermopolis until the last decades of the third century AD, when the reforms of Diocletian finally created an Antinoite nome.⁴⁶¹ This political promotion was the result of a longer process, which had seen the city of Hadrian developing its economy and – consequently – its prestige in the difficult decades of the third century. In this context, the rise of a rivalry with the neighbor Hermopolis is not surprising at all.⁴⁶² Taking all these elements into account, the reconstruction of Livrea, Gigli Piccardi, and Grenier is plausible. Two observations must be made, though. First, when introducing the island of the Nile, the poet does not present it in a bad light: he just notes that the gift of the river is “rich of grapes” and lies next to a “sweet neighbor” (see below). If he had had the intention to belittle the rival of Antinopolis, his verses would be less neutral. Second, when the poem says that Hadrian gave a πόλις to his divine favorite as a gift, it means that the emperor founded a city which was not present before. In the same way, we should interpret the gift of the Nile as something which was absent before Antinous’ deification; or, alternatively, as something facing deep changes after the death of Hadrian’s lover. The interpretation of Rea, who evoked a neglected territory brought into cultivation is a good example of the latter. Both Hermopolis and its nome were already present when Antinous died: the sources do not inform us about great changes to their structure. Hadrian had some areas of Hermopolis restored:⁴⁶³ if, however, the poet makes reference to this renovation, why did he mention the Nile? He could have named only Hadrian, the main responsible for the operation. In my opinion, another option is preferable: that the island of the Nile is the territory on which Antinopolis was founded. When Hadrian’s favorite is kidnapped by Selene, the emperor honors the divine wedding through the foundation of a new city: he founds the center and constitutes its official status, the Nile (= perhaps an image of Egypt itself?) provides the territory. As already stated, the word νῆσος need not necessarily refer

from the obligation to undertake liturgies or magistracies, the exemption from the taxes on sales of real property or slaves, etc. See Bell 1940, 142–143.

⁴⁶¹ The problem of Antinopolis’ status has been strongly discussed by scholars: for an analysis of it, cf. Bell 1940, 143–145.

⁴⁶² Cf. Méautis 1918, 164.

⁴⁶³ E.g. the street connecting the Sun’s gate to the Moon’s: Schwartz 1977.

to an island *stricto sensu*, but can simply indicate an area along the Nile. The city of Antinous rose up next to the river and was cultivated: both these elements are evoked by line 15.

v. 15. ἡ μὲν ἐριστάφυλος γλυκερῷ παρ[ὰ] γείτο[νι] κεῖται: lines 15–17 develop the images of the preceding verse, describing in a deeper manner the presents of Hadrian and the Nile. Since line 14 names the island after Antinopolis, one could expect the city to be presented first. This is the interpretation of Livrea, who identified the subject of the line with Hadrian’s foundation, and the “sweet neighbor” with Hermopolis.⁴⁶⁴ Two elements show however that the poet might have changed the order of the elements, introducing the gift of the Nile before that of the emperor. The first is the Dionysian epithet ἐριστάφυλος, “rich in grapes”: no Greek source attributes the adjective to a city, whereas Athenaeus witnesses its use for the island of Lesbos.⁴⁶⁵ The second is the ἄνθος Ἀχαιῖδος of line 16. The strong connection with the Hellenized world was one of the main attributes of Antinopolis (see below): referring it either to Hermopolis, or to another Egyptian settlement is not convincing.⁴⁶⁶ This chiastic reversal has a structural function. Placing Antinous’ city at the end of the narrative, immediately before the final celebration of Diocletian and his administrators, attributes high visibility to it. It makes the foundation of Antinopolis and its coronation (cf. v. 17) the apex of the poem.⁴⁶⁷ The poet says that the island of the Nile “lies beside the sweet neighbor”: if the νῆσος is the territory of Antinopolis, what is the γλυκερὸς γείτων? Following Grenier, who translated the passage as “l’une s’étale, riche en grappes, le long de son voisin fécond” (2008, 52), I suggest identifying it with the Nile itself. As already pointed out, the contact with its water is what makes Antinopolis’ territory an island (see above). From this perspective, it is not surprising that the poet mentions the river once again, noting that it flows beside its gift. A hint supporting the identification is provided by the adjective γλυκερός (“sweet”), which

⁴⁶⁴ Cf. 1999, 71–72; 2002, 21.

⁴⁶⁵ Cf. *Deipn.* III 44, 16.

⁴⁶⁶ Hermopolis remained strongly focused on its Egyptian origin: cf. **n. 4**.

⁴⁶⁷ If we identified the island with Hermopolis (or its territory: see above), we could read the altered order as a further element of de-escalation of the city.

frequently refers to water.⁴⁶⁸ Furthermore, the equivalent γλυκός is explicitly attributed to the Nile by sources such as Theophrastus and Agatarchides.⁴⁶⁹ To summarize: we can refer the ἡ μὲν to the Νεῖλοι[o] [...] νῆ[σος of line 14, i.e. to the territory of Antinopolis. It lies, rich in grapes, beside its sweet neighbor, that is, the Nile itself.

v. 16. ἡ δὲ λελεγμένον ἄνθος Ἀχαιῖδος ἐστὶ . [: if we link line 15 to the island of the Nile, we have to relate lines 16–17 to the gift of Hadrian, i.e. to Antinopolis. As already said, the poet moves the presentation of Antinous’ city to the end of his narrative, in order to improve its importance in the text (see above). Line 16 is incomplete: different solutions have been proposed to complete its text. Rea opted for the integration ἐστιό[ωσα (“housing”), but admitted that it does not correspond to the traces;⁴⁷⁰ Parsons proposed ἐστιάουσα (same meaning).⁴⁷¹ In both cases, the verse should be translated as “the other, housing the selected flower of Achaea”. Although possible, none of them is attested. A different hypothesis was suggested by Livrea, whose edition reads ἐστὶ γ[ενέθλης:⁴⁷² following that, the meaning of the line would be “the other is the selected flower of the Achaean breed”. Determining the original text is not possible: yet, we must observe that – of the three suggestions – Livrea’s is the more likely: it respects the sense of the passage (for what we can get of it) and – more importantly – is already attested in Greek epic.⁴⁷³ In spite of the missing letters, the sense of the verse is quite understandable: it highlights the connection between Antinopolis and the “Achaean flower”, i.e. the Greek world. Such a link has always been strong in the history of the city. Official letters were addressed Ἀντινοέων Νέων Ἑλλήνων τοῖς ἀρχουσι καὶ τῇ βουλῇ καὶ τῷ δήμῳ, “to the chief magistrates, the assembly, and the

⁴⁶⁸ See, for instance, Hom. *Od.* XII 306; Athen. *Deipn.* II 13, 23; Opp. *Cyn.* II 39; Nonn. *D.* X 228; XLII 97; XLVII 85.

⁴⁶⁹ Cf. Theoph. F 159 Wimmer; *FGrHist* 86, F19. See also *Schol. Vet. Aesch. Prom.* 807a; Phil. *Carm.* III 239, 1; *Glyc. Ann.* 32, 18. For the analogy between γλυκερὸς and γλυκός, cf. *LSJ*, 352.

⁴⁷⁰ Cf. 1996, 15.

⁴⁷¹ Cf. Rea 1996, *loc. cit.*

⁴⁷² 2002, 26.

⁴⁷³ Cf. Apoll. III 358; *QS Post.* I 191; Coll. *Rapt. Hel.* 301; Greg. Naz. *Carm.* 461, 10; Eud. *Hom.* I 1135; II 934; *AP IX* 212, 3.

people of Antinous' New Greeks".⁴⁷⁴ The very structure of the city evoked that of a Greek πόλις. Bell defined Antinopolis "a bulwark of Hellenism in Middle Egypt" and hypothesized that a specific project lay behind its foundation: Hadrian aimed to increase the scanty Hellenic components in Egyptian society. For this reason, he founded it in the Thebaid (i.e. the less Hellenized area of the province) and collected Greek colonists.⁴⁷⁵ The line of our poem demonstrates that this Hellenistic soul was still strong more than one hundred years after the foundation of Antinopolis.

v. 17. ἔστεπται λιμένεσσι ἀριστεύειν πεδίοι[ο:] as Gigli Piccardi highlighted, the crowning of Antinopolis echoes that of Antinous (cf. v. 13). On the basis of that, the scholar hypothesized a parallelism between the fate of the youth and that of his city: Antinous' star is crowned by a constellation; Antinopolis by the neighbor Hermopolis (cf. v. 15) and the ports of the Nile. In this perspective, the city of Thot would be reduced to a gem in Antinopolis' diadem.⁴⁷⁶ As already stated, the involvement of Hermopolis in this section of the poem is not necessary (see above). It must be noted, though, that the idea of a diadem crowning Antinopolis is still viable, even if we do not consider the neighbor city as one of its stones.⁴⁷⁷ The line speaks of "ports": they could be the components of the crown. Such an interpretation reveals the links between the catasterism of Antinous and the foundation of his city; along with that, it explains the problematic reference to more than a single port.⁴⁷⁸ The line is followed by a *paragraphos* separating it from the following section: for an analysis of its function, see the introduction.

⁴⁷⁴ Cf. *P. Stras.* 3, 130 (= *TM* 16938), 9–10.

⁴⁷⁵ Cf. 1940, 133–137. See also Grenier 2008, 57–58.

⁴⁷⁶ Cf. 2002, 57–58: «in quest'ottica Antinopolis appare come la nuova stella che brilla al centro di una corona [...] di cui fanno parte oltre ad Hermoupolis anche gli altri porti della valle del Nilo».

⁴⁷⁷ Furthermore: even if the comparison with Hermopolis is not clearly stated by the poet, it is implied by the infinite ἀριστεύειν («to be the best»). If Antinopolis is the best city of the plain, it implicitly means that Hermopolis is worse. An attempt to claim the primacy of Antinopolis in a lighter way?

⁴⁷⁸ In his commentary, Rea notes that «the plural may be justified by the facts, but we do not know of more than one» (1996, *loc. cit.*). It must be added that the choice of λιμένεσσι could be also due to metrical reasons.

vv. 18.–20. Ζεὺς μόγις οἰκτείρας γενεὴν Καπιτώλιος ἀν[δρῶν / κοιρανίην πάσης τραφερῆς πάσης τε θαλάσση[ς / ὥπασεν ἀντιθέῳ Διοκλητιανῷ βασιλῆϊ: the mention of Capitoline Zeus opens the last section of the fragment (and supposedly of the entire poem). After narrating Antinous' catasterism, the poet progresses onto the celebration of Diocletian's reign. This section, in particular, is useful to date the composition. The emperor ruled from the 20th November 284 to the 1st May 305 AD. He appointed Maximian – his former Caesar – as Augustus in 286, nominating Galerius and Constantius as Caesars on 1st March 293.⁴⁷⁹ Since the papyrus names only Diocletian (see below), one could date it the biennium 284–286, when the emperor ruled alone: such a dating is confirmed by the mention of Diogenes, the prefect of Egypt in the same years (cf. v. 27). From a metrical point of view, the dative Διοκλητιανῷ presents the same alteration of the Ἀδρια[ν]οῖο of line 14: the long alpha does not fit the structure of the verse; therefore, either the poet considered it short, or maintained it long taking the preceding iota as a semi-vowel (see above). Zeus' cult title Καπιτώλιος makes Rea suspect that the poem was written for the Capitoline games: the reference of line 39 to Olympian olive confirms it.⁴⁸⁰ These games were held in the second half of the third century AD both in Antinopolis and Oxyrhynchus.⁴⁸¹ Papyrus testimonies allow us to date the different editions: in Antinopolis, the games took place in 267/268, 271/272, 275/276, 279/280, 283/284, 287/288; in Oxyrhynchus, in 273, 277, 281, 285, 289, 293. As Rea notes, if we date the poem to between 284 and 286, we cannot refer it to the games in Antinopolis: the composition would have taken place between the fifth and sixth editions. However, we can easily link it to the fourth edition of Oxyrhynchus games.⁴⁸² The reasoning is plausible, but not unavoidable. The theme of the poem makes Antinopolis a better context for its performance than Oxyrhynchus. If there is no coincidence between the dating of the verses

⁴⁷⁹ The bibliography concerning Diocletian and the Tetrarchy is too rich to be summarized in a note. I just mention the fundamental works of Kolb (1987), Kuhoff (2001), and Roberto (2014).

⁴⁸⁰ Cf. 1996, 1–2.

⁴⁸¹ Cf. Frisch 1986, 37–39; 144–150; Humphrey 1986, 513–519.

⁴⁸² Cf. 1996, 2.

and the Capitoline games, nothing impedes considering the formers as written for a different occasion:⁴⁸³ Rea himself rightly mentioned the Μεγάλα Ἀντινόεια, the games held every year in honor of Antinous in Athens and Antinopolis.⁴⁸⁴ One could think also of the *adventus* of a magistrate (the procurator of Heptanomia, for instance: cf. vv. 32–33). Concerning the title of Zeus, it is not necessary to link it to the Capitoline games: since the poet is evoking the providential role of the Roman Empire, the reference to Ζεύς Καπιτώλιος (= Jupiter Optimus Maximus, the chief deity of the Roman pantheon) is not surprising.⁴⁸⁵ The text melds traditional *topoi* with more original images. If the representation of the Roman Empire as a divine aid for suffering humanity is not so innovative,⁴⁸⁶ the idea that Zeus' piety lies behind its constitution is quite interesting: Magnelli referred it to a passage of Oppian,⁴⁸⁷ suggesting that our poet could know it.⁴⁸⁸ More convincing is the hypothesis of Agosti, who spoke of a widespread rhetorical tradition, taught in schools and shared by late antique authors.⁴⁸⁹ As the scholar highlighted, the idea of an emperor sent by a merciful god to rescue humanity is mentioned also by Menander Rhetor, who introduces it as a possible topic for a στεφανωτικός λόγος.⁴⁹⁰ Miguélez Caverio noted that the same images are referred by Menander to the πρεσβευτικός (422, 10–13) and βασιλικός λόγος (370, 21–26).⁴⁹¹ Menander's reference

⁴⁸³ That could be confirmed by the reference to a olive crown (cf. v. 39): the crowns of the Capitoline games were of different material (see below).

⁴⁸⁴ Cf. 1996, 2. About Antinous' games, see Lambert 1984, 149, 205.

⁴⁸⁵ It must be noted that one of the quarters of Antinopolis was named *Kapitolieus*: the name originated from the identification of Hadrian with Zeus (cf. Bell 1940, 140). It confirms that the name was not extraneous to the public of the poet.

⁴⁸⁶ See, for instance, Verg. *Geor.* I 498–501; Ael. Arist. *Or.* 26, 103–107 (II 121–124 Keil).

⁴⁸⁷ Cf. *Hal.* II 669–675.

⁴⁸⁸ Cf. Magnelli 1998, 65.

⁴⁸⁹ Cf. 2002, 52–64, esp. 52: «piuttosto che indicare precisi riferimenti intertestuali, credo che si abbia qui a che fare con una tradizione retorica già ben consolidata». The concept is analogous to the «encomiastic koiné» of Pernot 1993, 1, 143.

⁴⁹⁰ Cf. 422, 16–20, 178 Russell–Wilson. Agosti used the thematic proximity between Menander's handbook and the poem of Antinous to discuss the dating of the former: cf. 2002, 54–56.

⁴⁹¹ Cf. 2008, 344.

supports the dating of *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352 to the first years of Diocletian's reign: it demonstrates indeed that the poet inserted into his composition material which could be used to celebrate a new ruler. To the same rhetorical *humus* we can ascribe the image of a lordship extended to land and sea occupying the whole verse 19.⁴⁹² The strict connection between Zeus and Diocletian was confirmed around 287 AD, when the emperor presented himself as the *Augustus Iovius*, directly invested by the χάρισμα of Jupiter.⁴⁹³ At the beginning of the seventh book of his *Dionysiaca*, Nonnus presents the advent of Dionysus on earth as a sign of Zeus' mercy towards humanity:⁴⁹⁴ as Livrea noted, the passage provides an interesting parallel to our lines.⁴⁹⁵ It can be useful to analyze in-depth the meaning of Diocletian's glorification (see below).

vv. 21.-22. μνημοσύνην δ' ἄχέων προτέρων σβέσσειν εἴ τις ἔτ' αἰνοῖς / μοχθίζει δεσμοῖσιν ἀφεγγέος ἔνδοθι χ[ώ]ρ[ου]: the last two feet of line 21 have been lost. The integration of Rea (σβέσσειν εἴ τις ἔτ' αἰνοῖς, "[...] quenched, if someone still in horrible [...]")⁴⁹⁶ has been accepted by all the scholars dealing with the passage. It connects the verse to the following one. Rea noticed also that the first word of line 22 – the verb μοχθίζει, "suffers" – presents a smear between the theta and the iota: it indicates a correction; according to the scholar, the deleted letter could have been an epsilon.⁴⁹⁷ The interpretation of the passage is not entirely clear. The poet makes reference to people suffering in obscurity: they have been rescued by Diocletian, who has also removed the memory of the former pain. According to Rea, the passage describes the effects of an amnesty, which could have taken place either for the crowning of the emperor, or for his *vicennalia* (303 AD).⁴⁹⁸ The

⁴⁹² Cf. Rea 1996, 16. For a similar attestation of the substantive κοῖρανῆ, see Nonn. *D.* XLI 389–391: the passage presents Zeus while giving the scepter to Augustus, and the power to Rome: cf. Miguélez Caverio 2008, 344, n. 403.

⁴⁹³ See Pasqualini 1979, 109–110; Kolb 1987, 63–64; Leadbetter 1998, 224; Kuhoff 2001, 44–45; Roberto 2014, 60–61.

⁴⁹⁴ Cf. *D.* VII 1–109.

⁴⁹⁵ Cf. 1999, 71.

⁴⁹⁶ 1996, 9.

⁴⁹⁷ Cf. 1996, *loc. cit.*

⁴⁹⁸ Cf. 1996, 16.

hypothesis was supported by Agosti, who added – as a possible context – the defeat of the usurper Domitianus (297–298 AD).⁴⁹⁹ In a similar fashion, Livrea placed the celebration of Diocletian after his Persian expedition (297 AD).⁵⁰⁰ Referring the amnesty (and the papyrus) to 297/298 or to 303 AD faces two difficulties: one, the presence of the prefect Diogenes, who was removed from his position in 286 AD (see below) and two, the absence of tetrarchs. Except for the dubious reference to the “choir wearing the military cloak” (cf. v. 36), no other passage of the poem mentions one of the members of the tetrarchic government. Gigli Piccardi cautiously observed that the] η ρ α κ λ η ο ς of line 11 could recall the title of Maximian (*Herculius*),⁵⁰¹ but the hypothesis is disputable: the citation of Heracles in a poem describing a hunt does not need a political background. The name of the hero comes after a mention of Nemea (cf. v. 10): the poet supposedly evokes the first labor of the demigod to create a parallelism with Hadrian and Antinous’ deeds (see above). If the text had been written for a public occasion following the Persian expedition, we would expect – at least – a mention of Galerius, the Caesar of the Orient. But the poem only names Diocletian. That provides further evidence to date the work to the first year of the emperor’s reign. Taking the passage as a representation of an amnesty is not the only possibility at our disposal. While analyzing the fragment, Gigli Piccardi highlighted the soteriological atmosphere pervading it, and linked the final section of the composition to the imperial mysteries (see below).

⁴⁹⁹ Cf. 2002, 56–58. For further information about the revolt and its consequences, cf. Thomas 1976, 253–279; Thomas 1977, 233–240; Barnes 1996, 532–552; Kuhoff 2001, 184–198; Roberto 2014, 114–118. As a possible objection to his contextualization, Agosti noted that – according to the sources – Diocletian punished the Egyptian rebels in a cruel way. In this perspective, the triumphal tone of our poem would be mismatched. The scholar replied that the references to the peace and the return of a golden age «rientrano in una prassi che tendeva a mascherare la realtà dei fatti» (2002, 58). Such an observation – supported by a quote of Kolb (1988, 38) – is correct. The imperial propaganda could alter reality, in order to provide a representation matching the exigencies of the central power: the celebration following the siege of Alexandria demonstrates that: cf. **n. 11, T1**.

⁵⁰⁰ Cf. 2002, 17. The contextualization is due to Livrea’s wider interpretation of *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352: see the introduction.

⁵⁰¹ Cf. 2002, 59.

vv. 23.–25. ἀλλὰ πατήρ μὲν παῖδα, γυνή θ' ἐὼν ἄνδρα λυθέ[ντας / εἰσοράα καὶ γνωτὸς ἀδελφεὸν οἷα μολόντας / εἰς φάος ἢ ἑλίοιο τὸ δεύτερον ἐξ Αἴδαο: lines 23–25 expand the image launched by the preceding verses, i.e. the beneficent effects of Diocletian's authority. After the generic reference to people suffering in obscurity, the poet goes into detail: thanks to the emperor, a father finds again his son, a wife her husband, a brother his brother. The παῖς, the ἀνὴρ, and the ἀδελφεός (epic form of ἀδελφός) have been released from the ἀφεγγής χῶρος of line 21. To describe their situation, the poet writes: οἷα μολόντας / εἰς φάος ἢ ἑλίοιο τὸ δεύτερον ἐξ Αἴδαο, “as if they moved for a second time from Hades to the light of the sun”. The epsilon of ἑλίοιο (epic form of ἥλιου) is above the other letters. In all probability, it has been added later: the writer must have forgotten it while copying the line. The mention of the sun light and the kingdom of death confirms the reading of Gigli Piccardi: according to her, a soteriological perspective pervades the poem.⁵⁰² The reference to cycles of death and renaissance does not belong only to Antinous' catasterism, but can be found also in the glorification of Diocletian. The similarities between lines 18–20 and the proem to the seventh book of Nonnus' *Dionysiaca* reflect the soteriological atmosphere (see above). The representation of people released from darkness and the celebration of a new age of peace (cf. vv. 29–30) also support this direction.⁵⁰³ The reading of Gigli Piccardi also involves the last verses of the fragment (cf. vv. 36–39): she suggested interpreting them as a final plea addressed to the emperor himself (the “blessed scepter-bearer” of line 36), presented by the poet as a *deus praesens*.⁵⁰⁴ Although the identification of the scepter-bearer with Diocletian can be disputed (see below), the soteriological reading of the section is hardly deniable. It can be considered the result of two factors: one, of what we could define “Egyptian spirituality”, i.e. a special interest towards “i concetti, tipici delle celebrazioni misteriche, di morte e rinascita”⁵⁰⁵ and two, of Diocletian's imperial propaganda. The

⁵⁰² As already said, she resorts to this aspect to explain the ζωάργιον Ἀντιν[όοιο of line 1, as well as the φ[αε]ῖνοτέρησιν ἐπ' ἐλπωρήσιν of line 11 (see above).

⁵⁰³ Cf. Gigli Piccardi 2002, 58–60.

⁵⁰⁴ This image of the emperor was the base of the Imperial Mysteries: cf. Pleket 1965.

⁵⁰⁵ Cf. Gigli Piccardi 2002, 60.

announcement of a returning golden age is something we can expect from a newly crowned emperor: if this emperor is Diocletian, who considered the restoration of past Roman glory the main goal of his reign, such a representation is even more comprehensible.⁵⁰⁶ The handbook of Menander shows that these concepts belonged to the imperial rhetorical practice: a poet aiming to celebrate the central power must choose them, adapting them to his personal culture. In this situation, it is not so important to determine whether the poet wrote in occasion of a real amnesty or not. Ideas such as the rescuing of suffering people, or the passage from a deathly darkness to the light of the day, must have reflected wider expectations of the age: the dark years of political instability and crisis were over; with the accession of Diocletian, the glorious light of the past was shining again. I would consider all these elements further proofs of an early dating of our poem.

vv. 26. – 28. ἀσπασίως δ' ἀγαθοῖο φιλοφροσύνην βασιλῆος / δέξατο Διογένης ῥυσίπτολις, ἐς δὲ πόλης / ὅτραλέως προέηκε πόνων πολυγηθέα λήθην: lines 26–28 provide another *topos* of rhetorical tradition. Menander says that one of the features of a good ruler is the ability to find good administrators.⁵⁰⁷ As Miguélez Cavero noted, the reference to Diogenes receiving the φιλοφροσύνη of the ἀγαθὸς βασιλεὺς Diocletian reflects this idea.⁵⁰⁸ Gigli Piccardi highlighted the Dionysian character of the expression πόνων πολυγηθέα λήθην, “the gladsome oblivion of pains”:⁵⁰⁹ the adjective πολυγηθής, in particular, was connected to Dionysus since the time of Hesiod.⁵¹⁰ This connection with Dionysus, likewise that pointed out by Livrea (see above) is another sign of the soteriological portrait of Diocletian, the savior of humanity. Marcus Aurelius Diogenes was the prefect of Egypt between 284 and 286 AD.⁵¹¹ Any attempt to date our poem later than

⁵⁰⁶ About Diocletian's (attempted) restoration, cf. Roberto 2014, 128–164.

⁵⁰⁷ Cf. 375, 18–21.

⁵⁰⁸ Cf. 2008, 345.

⁵⁰⁹ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.*

⁵¹⁰ *Theog.* 941; *Op.* 614; F 70, 6. Further references in Gigli Piccardi 2002, 60, n. 35.

⁵¹¹ About Diogenes' career, cf. *PLRE* I, 256 ('M. Aurelius Diogenes 7').

this biennium must therefore solve the problem of his mention. As already mentioned, Livrea placed the redaction of the text after Diocletian's Persian expedition (see above). In order to get rid of Diogenes, he suggested reading διογενής ρυσίπολις not as a proper name ("Diogenes who saves the city"), but as a Homeric adjective ("the elected by Zeus, who saves the city"). In doing so, he noted that the procurator of the Heptanomia remains anonymous too.⁵¹² The use of διογενής as an adjective goes along with the Tetrarchic propagandistic choices: we already saw that Diocletian presented himself as the *Augustus Iovius*. Therefore, every official chosen by him could be defined as "elected by Zeus". In spite of that, Livrea's suggestion raises at least two problems. In the first place, the adjectival reading of διογενής makes it impossible to determine who receives the friendship of the emperor. The procurator of the Heptanomia is nameless as well, but the poet explicitly cites his political role (cf. v. 33). Furthermore, he addresses him in the second person singular (cf. vv. 32–33): it implies that the interlocutor is attending the poetic performance. If not to modern readers, these two elements made the identity of the procurator clear to the late antique public. The situation is different with the subordinate of Diocletian. Without a name, he must remain unknown even to the first listeners. Indeed, the poet presents him in the third person singular (δέξατο, προέηκε) and uses two vague adjectives without any official meaning (διογενής, ρυσίπολις).⁵¹³

vv. 29.–31. γηθοσύνη 'ι' πᾶς χῶρος ἰαίνεται ὡς ἐπὶ φωτ[ί / χρυσεῖης γενεῆς, ἀνδροκτασίης τε λιασθεῖ[ς / κεῖται ἀναιμωτὶ κολεῶν ἐν[[δ]]'τ'οσθε σίδηρος: all three lines show signs of corrections. The first comes at the beginning of line 29. The substantive γηθοσύνη ("joy") is followed by a sign which could be either an iota, or an ink spot. Since the verb ἰαίνω ("to take delight") requires the *dativus rei*, we can interpret it as an iota.⁵¹⁴ The scant space between the last eta of γηθοσύνη and the pi of πᾶς shows that the letter was originally

⁵¹² CF. 2002, 17. The same solution was sustained by Agosti 2002, 57.

⁵¹³ I disagree with Agosti 2002, 51, who said that both the prefect and the procurator were «evidentemente presenti alla recitazione». The text does not provide any specific reference in this respect.

⁵¹⁴ Cf. *LSJ*, 813.

omitted and added at a later moment. For the second line, the papyrus reveals traces of faded ink around the tau of $\tau\epsilon$: Rea suggested that “it might be remains of a delta washed out and replaced by a tau” (1996, 16), basing his hypothesis on the correction of the following verse. In line 31, the copyist wrote $\epsilon\upsilon\delta\omicron\sigma\theta\epsilon$ instead of $\epsilon\upsilon\tau\omicron\sigma\theta\epsilon$ (“from within”). The substitution of the voiceless dental stop τ with the voiced δ is a phonetic mistake quite common in Egypt.⁵¹⁵ The papyrus presents the same phenomenon in other two passages (cf. vv. 32, 39). In each of the cases, the copyist corrected the mistake, writing a tau over the delta.⁵¹⁶ This aspect differentiates these amendments from the editing hypothesized by Rea: whereas – according to the scholar – the delta of line 30 should have been washed away, the letters of lines 31, 32, and 39 have been simply overwritten. Such a difference makes the hypothesis of a faded ink spot more convincing than that of a correction. The subject of line 29 is $\pi\tilde{\alpha}\varsigma\ \chi\tilde{\omega}\rho\omicron\varsigma$, “the whole land, every land”: Rea interpreted it as a reference to the whole land of Egypt, because it follows the mention of the prefect Diogenes. Such a reading is plausible: yet, there is also the possibility that the expression has a wider meaning. In other words, that the poet refers to the entire Roman world. It is true that the line comes after the presentation of Diogenes, a local functionary; but it is also true that the passage announces the new golden age brought by Diocletian to the whole of humanity (see above). Both possibilities are valuable. The presentation of the $\phi\tilde{\omega}\varsigma\ \chi\rho\upsilon\sigma\epsilon\acute{\iota}\eta\varsigma\ \gamma\epsilon\nu\epsilon\eta\varsigma$, “the light of a golden age”, is quite traditional: along with the emphasis given to the light, the poet exalts the abandonment of any weapon (the $\sigma\acute{\iota}\delta\eta\rho\omicron\varsigma$ of line 31, which lies $\acute{\alpha}\nu\alpha\iota\mu\omega\tau\acute{\iota}$, “without shedding blood”). Miguélez Caverio found similarities between this section of the poem and a passages of Triphiodorus reporting Priam’s hopes of peace.⁵¹⁷ Another confirmation of the strict link between the anonymous poet and the culture of his age.

⁵¹⁵ Cf. Gignac 1976, I 82–83, n. 46–48.

⁵¹⁶ As already said, Magnelli (1998, 64) used these errors to support his alternative reading of line 8: the difficulties of this have already been discussed (see above).

⁵¹⁷ Cf. 2008, 344. See lines 425–431.

vv. 32.-35. καὶ σὺ δὲ δω[[δ]]τ'ίνην βασιληΐδα πᾶσι γεγηθώς, / [Ε]πτὰ Νομῶν, ἡγγειλας, ἐπίτροπε. σεῖο δὲ Νεῖλος [/ μελιχίν καὶ πρόσθεν ἐπήνεξεν, ὁππότε κεδ[νῆ / εὐδικίη δῖεπες Νειλωΐδος ἄστρα Θήβης: after having referred to Diocletian and his prefect Diogenes in the third person, the poet directly addresses the ἐπίτροπος [Ε]πτὰ Νομῶν, the “procurator of the Heptanomia”. As already stated, this address demonstrates that the official was present at the poetic performance: his attendance distinguishes him from his superiors, addressed in the third person (see above). The vocative ἐπίτροπε is followed by a sign, which could be interpreted as a dipole. Since this graphic symbol was normally written in the margin of the text, its presence in the corpus of the line is quite interesting. Livrea interpreted it as a “rinvio ad una notazione marginale (per noi perduta) che conteneva il nome del magistrato” (1999, 69, n. 2). The reliability of this hypothesis depends on the function of *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352: if it corresponds to the copy used at the original performance, a cross-reference to the procurator’s name would be scarcely plausible. The magistrate was present at the reading: why should someone need to specify his name in a gloss? The situation changes if we take the papyrus as a later copy: in this case, the idea of a note explaining an obscure passage of the text would be acceptable. Another interesting proposal was made by Rea: he considered the papyrus as a testimony of the original performance, and interpreted the dipole as a sign notifying a pause in the reading.⁵¹⁸ After mentioning Diocletian and Diogenes, the actor (or the choir: see above) referred to the procurator, who was attending the ceremony. At this point, the public could have applauded the functionary: the dipole reminded the reader(s) to make a pause, allowing the ἐπίτροπος to receive the homages of his subjects. The identification of the functionary is not easy: the difficulties concern not only his name, but also his administrative role. The Heptanomia was an administrative unit comprising the area between the Delta and Thebes: that of Hermopolis was one of its districts. Until the end of the third century AD, the region was subordinate to an ἐπιστράτηγος with the rank of *procurator Augusti*; from 302 AD at least, the functionary was

⁵¹⁸ Cf. 1996, *loc. cit.*

replaced by the ἐπίτροπος Ἑπτανομίας.⁵¹⁹ If we date the papyrus between 284 and 286 AD, this chronological prospect creates some problems: the poem explicitly addresses the ἐπίτροπος, and the figure officially appears in the area only at the beginning of the fourth century. In order to solve the impasse, Rea interpreted the ἐπίτροπε of line 32 as a reference to the ἐπιστράτηγος.⁵²⁰ Gigli Piccardi argued against Rea's hypothesis, noting that "la sua equiparazione [...] non sembra suffragata dall'uso linguistico dei papiri coevi" (2002, 60, n. 33). An examination of the uses of the substantive ἐπίτροπος is necessary to disentangle the matter. The analysis of Thomas confirms that "ἐπίτροποι was employed of epistrategoi only when [...] a larger group of officials was in mind, which included procurators other than epistrategoi. This would seem to imply, as the converse, that ἐπίτροποι would *not* be used of epistrategoi alone" (1982, 47–48). It must be noted, though, that this use of ἐπίτροπος concerns official documents, such as petitions⁵²¹ or lawsuits;⁵²² the situation could be a bit different for a poetic composition. Three points must be taken into account. First, the verse inscription *Memnon* 36 reports the words ἐπιτροπ[έω]ν Θηβηίδος (3–4), referring to the ἐπιστράτηγος of the Thebaid.⁵²³ Second, from a metrical viewpoint, the substantive ἐπιστράτηγος is quite difficult to use: the sequence U — U — U could fit an iambic verse, not a hexameter.⁵²⁴ Third, the equivalence between ἐπιστράτηγος and ἐπίτροπος also had a technical value: as Thomas wrote, "since epistrategoi were equestrian procurators [...], it was technically correct to describe them as ἐπίτροποι" (1982, 47). To summarize: although not common, the poetic use of ἐπίτροπος as a substitute of ἐπιστράτηγος is attested; it is justified by metrical reasons, and is not wrong from an official point of view. These elements show that the ἐπιστράτηγος of the Heptanomia could hide behind the ἐπίτροπος of line 32. The reference does not create a problem for the early dating of the papyrus. One can accept the

⁵¹⁹ Cf. Ameling 1998.

⁵²⁰ Cf. 1996, 16.

⁵²¹ E.g. *P. Mich. Inv.* 2920, 5; *BGU* 1, 168, 3–4.

⁵²² E.g. *P. Oxy.* VII 237, 14–15; *BGU* 2, 648, 14. For the exam of these and the preceeding testimonies, see Thomas 1982, 47.

⁵²³ Cf. Thomas 1982, 48.

⁵²⁴ Cf. Rea 1996, *loc. cit.*

hypothesis of Rea. The poet provides a hint to the identity of the ἐπιστράτηγος: he says that the functionary has governed “the towns of Nilotic Thebes” (Νειλωΐδος ἄστυα Θήβης). Such a reference must be clear to the public contemporary with the poem, but it is less simple to understand for modern readers. In order to explain it, Rea proposed three alternatives:⁵²⁵ a) before taking control of the Heptanomia, the nameless functionary held the position of ἐπιστράτηγος in the Thebaid. Such a CV would reveal an out of the ordinary career. Since the foundation of the ἐπιστρατηγία, we know of only a single man who served as ἐπιστράτηγος in two districts: his name was Bassus; he governed Pelusium and the Thebaid in the first half of the second century AD;⁵²⁶ b) the functionary served as an acting ἐπιστράτηγος in the Thebaid and was then promoted;⁵²⁷ c) he was a legal adviser (συνκάθεδρος) of the ἐπιστράτηγος of Thebaid.⁵²⁸ All these alternatives are possible: unfortunately, it is not possible to go further and to verify them. The absence of other testimonies concerning the nameless officer (either from our poem, or from other documentary sources) impedes it. A last remark is necessary. When commenting on the passage, Rea wrote: “it is difficult to think of a post with judicial authority over several cities of the Thebaid which would be junior to the epistrategus of the Heptanomia” (1996, *loc. cit.*). That would be true, if we took our passage as a precise official note. Since we are facing a celebrative poem, nothing precludes the poet exaggerating the past importance of the ἐπιστράτηγος, presenting a normal administrative service as something more prestigious.

vv. 36.–39. ἀλλ', ὦ [χ]λαινοφόροιο μάκαρ σκηπτουῖκε χοροῖο, / λισσομένω μοι ἄρηξον. ἐπ'εὶ καὶ νυκτὶ καὶ ἡοῖ / ἡμετέροις καμάτοισι'ν' ἐπίσκοπος αὐτὸς ἔη[σθα, / στέψον Ὀλυμπιάδος με τεῆς πε[[δ]]'τ'άλο[ισ]ιν ἐ[λαίης: the final lines of the fragment contain a plea to an unspecified “blessed scepter-bearer”, who is presented as the leader of “the choir wearing the military cloak” (ὦ [χ]λαινοφόροιο

⁵²⁵ Cf. 1996, 17.

⁵²⁶ Cf. Thomas 1982, 186 (n. 16), 192 (n. 82), 194–195.

⁵²⁷ As Rea noted, such a promotion does not have any direct parallel (cf. 1996, *loc. cit.*).

⁵²⁸ For parallel examples, cf. Rea 1996, *loc. cit.*

μάκαρ σκηπτοῦκε χοροῖο). The identification of this σκηπτοῦκος is discussed. According to Rea, the reference of line 39 to the “Olympian olive” reveals that the poet is addressing Zeus; behind the mention of a χορός, the scholar saw a reference to “a chorus of ephebes in military clothing” including also the poet (1996, *loc. cit.*). Agosti maintained instead that the plea is addressed to Diocletian, identified with Zeus. In his view, the choir is composed of the tetrarchs, who were usually represented with the χλαῖνα.⁵²⁹ A similar interpretation was provided by Gigli Piccardi: she observed that the plea to the emperor is a part of the imperial mysteries, and is often entrusted to a choir.⁵³⁰ In his study on the papyrus, Livrea opted for an intermediate solution: he highlights indeed that the passage is entirely based on the ambiguity between Zeus and Diocletian; the choir itself could recall either a priest college, or a military guard.⁵³¹ As this brief list of hypotheses show, all scholars agree on one point: whoever the “blessed scepter-bearer” is, he is represented with the attributes of Zeus.⁵³² The connection between the supreme god and Diocletian has already been highlighted (see above): that the latter could be interested in an identification with the former is not implausible. However, before reading our verses as a plea to the divinized emperor, an element at least must be highlighted. Just a few lines before this passage, Zeus is said to have sent Diocletian to the Earth as an aid to humanity (see above). The poet connects the two figures, but does not combine them. Because of this separation, I would have the final lines refer to Zeus: even from a structural point of view, a return to the god is not implausible. The poet starts his final section

⁵²⁹ Cf. 2002, 56–58.

⁵³⁰ Cf. 2002, 59–60.

⁵³¹ Cf. 2002, 21.

⁵³² Along with the Olympian olive of line 39, we could also take into account the adjective σκηπτοῦκος: σκηπτοῦχος Ὀλύμπου («scepter-bearer of the Olympus») was one of the titles of Zeus. Some references in Nonnus exemplifies that. While describing the deeds of Thyphon, the poet says that the monster used to present himself as the νέον σκηπτοῦχον Ὀλύμπου (*D.* I 479). The same title is ironically attributed to him by Zeus himself, when the lord of the gods defeats the monster (cf. *D.* II 570: ψευδόμενε σκηπτοῦχε, «false scepter-bearer»). From the same speech of Zeus, see also line 581: Ζῆνα μὲν ἀδρανέοντα καὶ οὐ σκηπτοῦχον Ὀλύμπου («a weak Zeus, who is not lord of the Olympus anymore»).

naming the son of Cronos; then, he moves down to Diocletian, Diogenes, and the ἐπίτροπος; finally, he returns to the origin, i.e. to the Ζεὺς Καπιτώλιος of line 18. From this perspective, how should we interpret the reference to the choir? The adjective χλαιοφόρος is attested only in a passage of Gregory of Nazianzus⁵³³ and in *P. Flor.* 2.144:⁵³⁴ in both cases, the army is referred to. The same meaning would fit our text: the poet addresses Zeus as the lord of the army, and asks him to concede the olive to his work. Concerning the olive crown, Rea wrote: “it must be admitted that the crowns for Capitoline games were of oak [...]. This may invalidate my suggestion, but I would argue that in this passage the conventions of Greek invocations to Zeus are predominant, although the mention of Capitoline Zeus in 18 indicates that the game in question were Capitoline” (1996, *loc. cit.*).⁵³⁵ This reasoning could also be true in reverse: the crown of a different material reveals that the performance of the poem was not related to the Capitoline games, whereas the mention of Ζεὺς Καπιτώλιος in line 18 is the result of a literary convention. In all probability, the poem ended with the plea to Zeus (see the Introduction): as Livrea noted, a similar conclusion can be found in Oppian’s *Halieutica*.⁵³⁶

⁵³³ *Ep.* 86, 1.

⁵³⁴ Page 143 = Heitsch 36 = *MP*³ 1849, 2 = *LDAB* 5950: cf. Miguélez Caverio 2008, 66, n. 43.

⁵³⁵ Further references about the crown in Frisch 1986, 39.

⁵³⁶ Cf. II 664–688. Cf. Livrea 2002, 21.

4.

ANONYMOUS PATRIA OF HERMOPOLIS

(*P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481; *FGrHist* 637; *BNJ* 637; Page 136; Heitsch 24; Pack² 1849; *MP*³ 1848; *LDAB* 5742; *TM* 64515)

Introduction

P. Stras. Gr. Inv. 481 – the so-called *Cosmogony of Strasbourg* – consists of a single papyrus sheet, gravely ruined on the right side of the *recto* and more lightly on the internal border. The lower part of it is mutilated, but there are probably not many missing lines.⁵³⁷ The surviving hexameters (forty-five per page) give a wide-ranging representation of the creation of the world. Zeus commands his son Hermes to order the chaos and to create the universe. The god uses the golden rod of his father to reconcile the fighting elements and shapes the earth: there, along with his son Λόγος, he looks for a place to found a city. The foundation must receive the first rays of the sun. Having discarded the iced areas of the north and the hot countries of the south, Hermes chooses the λεχ[ω]ϊὰς Ὠκυγίη χθ[ώ]ν, “the fertile land Ogygia” (cf. **F2**, v. 36). The place of discovery of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 is not known.⁵³⁸ Reitzenstein acquired it in Giza and published its *editio princeps* in 1901.⁵³⁹ Along with it, the scholar bought another sheet, coming from the same codex and written by the same hand: in spite of the common origin, this second piece has been catalogued as a different papyrus under the name *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 480.⁵⁴⁰ It consists of a single sheet, written on both the sides. Each side contains twenty fragmentary hexameters and is missing around thirty lines. What remains exalts the Persian campaign of Diocletian and Galerius (297 AD) and compares the tetrarchs to Zeus and Apollo fighting the giants.⁵⁴¹

⁵³⁷ Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 10.

⁵³⁸ Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 1. The papyrus could be of Hermopolitan origin: cf. Worp 1998, 206.

⁵³⁹ Cf. Reitzenstein 1901, 53–58.

⁵⁴⁰ Cf. Reitzenstein 1901, 48–50.

⁵⁴¹ *MP*³ 1848 = *LDAB* 5742. Critical text in Heitsch 1965, 21–22.

Both papyri used to belong to the same codex: this raises the question of their connection. When editing the two sheets, Reitzenstein did not deal extensively with the problem: he thought that both poems had been written either by the same author, or by two poets of the same period,⁵⁴² and used the reference to Diocletian's campaign to date them to the end of the third century AD.⁵⁴³ The scholar was more interested in the religious elements of the Egyptian cosmogony.⁵⁴⁴ Bidez was the first to take both texts into account, attributing them to Soterichus of Oasis (cf. **n. 11**).⁵⁴⁵ For one, he identified the hexameters on the Persian campaign with Soterichus' *Encomium to Diocletian*;⁵⁴⁶ for the other, he hypothesized that the lines on Hermes were the mythical introduction to the *Patria of Oasis*.⁵⁴⁷ With the exception of Wilamowitz-Moellendorf,⁵⁴⁸ such a link has not been accepted.⁵⁴⁹

Keydell identified the city of Hermes with Hermopolis Magna, the Egyptian *Khmun*.⁵⁵⁰ To confirm his hypothesis, he provided two pieces of evidence: a) while presenting the main character of his poem, the author writes: κείνος δὴ Νόος ἐστὶν ἐμὸς πατρώϊος Ἑρμῆς, "that is

⁵⁴² Cf. Reitzenstein 1901, 58.

⁵⁴³ Cf. Reitzenstein 1901, 51.

⁵⁴⁴ As he observed, «erheblich mehr ist aus dem zweiten Blatt (481) und dem zweiten Liede zu gewinnen» (1901, 52). Such a disparity was criticized, one year later, by Cumont (1902, 36 – 40). In 1921, Reitzenstein returned to *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481, interpreting it as a poem on the antiquities of Berytus: see the commentary to **F2**, vv. 12–14.

⁵⁴⁵ Cf. 1903, 465–467.

⁵⁴⁶ Cf. **n. 11, T1**.

⁵⁴⁷ Cf. **n. 11, T3**.

⁵⁴⁸ Cf. 1942, 200–203.

⁵⁴⁹ At first, Janiszewski supported the identification, but changed his mind afterwards. See Derda–Janiszewski 2002, 65: «Soterichos Oasites is the most probable author of the poem preserved by P. Strasb. inv. 480. Hence, if we were to accept the 'single author' hypothesis for both texts preserved on the pages of the codex of Strasbourg, then we would have to go back to Bidez and to his reasoning; P. Strasb. inv. 481 would thus contain an introductory part of the *Patria Oaseos*, composed, let us add, under the influence of Hermetic scripts». Janiszewski 2006, 226: «Since the identification of the text of from the Strasbourg papyrus with Soterichos' Πάτρια Ὁάσεως is uncertain, I shall deal with P. Strasbourg 481 separately, as a work written by an anonymous author from Hermopolis.»

⁵⁵⁰ For an introduction to the Egyptian city, see Bonnet 2000, 293–295.

the *Nous*, the Hermes of my fathers” (F1, v. 2). A similar expression is used in a papyrus of the mid-third century AD while reporting the proceedings of the boule of Hermopolis: τοῦ [πατρῶου] ἡμῶν θεοῦ τρισεγίστου Ἑρμοῦ, “of Hermes Trismegistus, the god of our fathers”;⁵⁵¹ b) according to the Egyptian tradition, the first city ever created on earth was Hermopolis. It was founded by the god Thoth (= Hermes). The two points led the scholar to conclude that the text of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 is not Soterichus’ *Patria of Oasis*: it is a *Patria of Hermopolis*, written by a citizen of Hermopolis. He managed to unify Egyptian traditions (e.g. the primogeniture of Hermes/Thoth) and Greek elements (e.g. “die zentrale Stellung der Stadtgründung”).⁵⁵² Since Soterichus is not the author of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481, he cannot be the author of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 480 either, because both texts have been written by the same person.⁵⁵³

Keydell’s hypothesis was accepted by Jacoby, who inserted *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 into his collection and entitled it *Anonymous, De conditu Hermopolis* (= *FGrHist* 637). In a similar manner, Heitsch edited the text under the title *Mercurius mundi et Hermupolis magnae conditor*.⁵⁵⁴ Zieliński refused the identification of the nameless ἄστὺ with Hermopolis: he pointed out that the name Ὠγυγίη, usually interpreted as a reference to Egypt, can also refer to other regions and proposed to read in *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 an old Arcadian tradition.⁵⁵⁵ The Egyptian setting of the papyrus was proposed again by Wyss – who saw in its lines a source of Gregory of Nazianzus⁵⁵⁶ – and Gigli Piccardi.⁵⁵⁷ The former attributed the poem to Antimachus of

⁵⁵¹ Wessely 1905, 125 (= *TM* 18713); cf. Meautis 1918, 175–176.

⁵⁵² Keydell 1936, 466. The anonymous poet supposedly was one of the models of Hermeias of Hermopolis, who wrote a *Patria* of his city between the fourth and the fifth centuries AD (see n. 9).

⁵⁵³ Cf. Keydell 1936, 467.

⁵⁵⁴ Cf. 1963, 23–25. A different approach was showed by Page, who supported the Egyptian interpretation of the poem, but not the identification of Hermes’ city with Hermopolis: cf. 1941, 545–546.

⁵⁵⁵ Cf. 1941, 63–69, 113–121. See the commentaries to F1, v. 2 and F2, v. 36.

⁵⁵⁶ Cf. 1949, 194, n. 45. For a discussion of the hypothesis, see the commentary to F1, vv. 7–8, 24–25, 26–27, 32, 35; F2, vv. 1–4, 5.

⁵⁵⁷ Cf. 1990, 14–29.

Heliopolis,⁵⁵⁸ the latter to Andronichus of Hermopolis.⁵⁵⁹ Gigli Piccardi, in particular, questioned the common authorship of the two papyri.⁵⁶⁰

A new attempt to attribute both the texts to the same poet was made by Livrea. He proposed to consider *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 480 and *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 as parts of the same work, namely a “poema epico-storico” (2002, 17) which also included the verses of *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352 (= **n. 3**). Following the example of Bidez, he attributed it to Soterichus. I already analyzed the papyrus of Oxyrhynchus and the problems it raises, but have not yet discussed Livrea’s hypothesis.⁵⁶¹ It is mainly based on two different points. First, he highlighted that the two papyri of Strasbourg were two sheets of the same codex, written by the same hand. Second, he noted some similarities between them and the poem from Oxyrhynchus.⁵⁶² These elements allowed Livrea to formulate his hypothesis. The three papyri belonged to a single poem: the first section of it included the creation of the world and the foundation of Hermopolis (= *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481); the second introduced the neighboring Antinopolis, celebrating the *adventus* of Diocletian in the region (= *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352); the third and last part celebrated Diocletian’s victories against the Persians (= *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 480).⁵⁶³

⁵⁵⁸ Cf. *Sud.* α 2682.

⁵⁵⁹ Cf. *Phot. Bibl.* cod. 279, 536a.

⁵⁶⁰ As she wrote, «non è possibile giungere ad una conclusione sicura a questo riguardo. Conosciamo infatti la labilità delle argomentazioni basate sullo stile, soprattutto in un campo come quello dell’epica tardoantica [...]. Anche il fatto che i due fogli facessero parte di uno stesso codice papiraceo non può essere considerato un’argomentazione decisiva [...]. Per quanto riguarda la natura dell’opera, sono più propensa a credere che si tratti di due poemetti diversi» (1990, 45–46).

⁵⁶¹ See the introduction to **n. 3**.

⁵⁶² Cf. 2002, 20–21. One could quote in particular the reference to For the analysis of the similarities, see the commentaries to **n. 3**, **F1**, v. 4; **F6**, v. 15; **n. 4**, **F1**, vv. 4, 9, 10, 19; **F2**, v. 39.

⁵⁶³ Cf. 2002, 21: «una conseguenza importante delle considerazioni fin qui svolte si materializza nella possibilità [...] di un riferimento dei tre papiri ad un unico poema, con il seguente ordinamento probabile dei frammenti: 1) S = *P. Strasb.* 481, contenente un πάτριον di Hermoupolis che assume un’apparenza cosmogonica; 2) O = *P. Oxy.* 4352, contente un πάτριον dell’antistante Antinoupolis [...], seguito (fr. 5. II. 17–39) da un encomio dell’ *adventus* in quella regione di Diocleziano, novello Zeus – Hermes e novello Antinoo garante della

The interpretation of Livrea has not been followed by the scholars.⁵⁶⁴ Indeed, it raises some difficulties. The first problem is chronological. *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352 mentions Marcus Aurelius Diogenes, who was the prefect of Egypt between 284 and 286 AD (cf. **n. 3, F6**, v. 27). As already seen, such a reference dates the papyrus to 285 AD. *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 480 is clearly later: it describes the Tetrarchic expedition against Persia, which took place at the end of the third century AD, between 297 and 299.⁵⁶⁵ If the fragment was part of a poem including the papyrus of Oxyrhynchus also, the dating of the latter need to be postponed. That makes the mention of Diogenes quite problematic. To solve the *impasse*, Livrea suggested reading διογενής ρυσίπτολις not as a proper name ("Diogenes who saves the city") but as a Homeric adjective ("the elected by Zeus, who saves the city"). As already discussed, such a solution is disputable.⁵⁶⁶

Postponing the dating of *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352 raises a second problem too. When describing the merciful attitude of Zeus towards humanity, the poet presents Diocletian as the savior of the world. There is no mention of the other Tetrarchs, not even of Galerius, who is one of the protagonists of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 480. If the lines were written after the Persian expedition, why are Diocletian's colleagues not named? The propaganda following the Persian victory was strongly based on the idea of unity and communion between the Tetrarchs and the lonely representation of Diocletian clashes with it.⁵⁶⁷ Given these two difficulties, I would return to the interpretation of Rea, identifying the friend of the emperor as the prefect Diogenes and dating the papyrus to

felicitas temporum; 3) A = *P. Strasb.* 480, con la campagna persiana di Diocleziano».

⁵⁶⁴ In the article she dedicated to *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352, Gigli Piccardi defined it «un ardito [...] progetto di ricostruzione» (2002, 55 n. 1), but did not go further. Similarly, Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, *Commentary*) highlighted «the complexity» of the reconstruction. In his study of fragmentary historians, Janiszewski considered it «quite bizarre» (2006, 233).

⁵⁶⁵ Cf. Kuhoff 2001, 173–177; Roberto 2014, 112–114.

⁵⁶⁶ See the commentary to **n. 3, F6**, v. 27.

⁵⁶⁷ Two hypothetical references to the Tetrarchs were recognized by Agosti (2002, 56–58) and Gigli Piccardi (2002, 59). For an examination of the two hypotheses, see the commentary to **n. 3, F6**, v. 36 and **F2**, v. 11.

the first years of Diocletian's reign, when the emperor ruled alone (285–286 AD).⁵⁶⁸

Another difficulty comes from the codicological evidence. The reconstruction of Livrea places the cosmologic fragment at the beginning of Soterichus' poem, whereas the verses describing the Persian war conclude it. But the analysis of Malnati has revealed that *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 480 originally preceded *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481.⁵⁶⁹ Another problem involves the structure of Soterichus' poem. The great variety of contents and the peculiar nature of their connections would challenge the ποικιλία of Nonnus himself. As Janiszewski wrote, "the encomium constructed by Livrea is [...] an astonishing combination of plots and motives, from the hermetic cosmogony, through the foundation of Antinoopolis, to the appraisal of Diocletian's policy in Egypt and the Persian war" (2006, 233). The link between some of these elements is understandable: for instance, the connection between Hermes and Antinous, echoed by the references to Hermopolis and Antinopolis. Other connections are less comprehensible. Just to offer some examples: what is the link between the creation of the world and the Persian expedition of Diocletian and Galerius? It is plausible to suppose that a work aiming to glorify the oriental war of the Tetrarchs would have avoided such a long introduction. On the other hand, a poem celebrating the divine foundation of Hermopolis did not need an extended digression on a contemporary conflict. It would be possible to answer that the Persian war – i.e. the final affirmation of the Tetrarchic system (according to the imperial propaganda)⁵⁷⁰ – constituted the end of the process started with the creation of the world. Or, otherwise, that the description of the Persian war was necessary to glorify the present rulers: such a celebrative attitude is fundamental in late antique Greek poetry. Both ideas should be discussed. In order to affirm the former

⁵⁶⁸ Such a dating fits the reference to an amnesty seen by Rea (1996, 16) in **n. 3, F6**, v. 21–25, and confirmed by Agosti (2002, 55–56) through a series of textual parallels.

⁵⁶⁹ Cf. 1999, 101–108. Moreover, the examination of Rea (1996, 1) reveals that the first fragment of *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4325 was near the extern margin of the papyrus (cf. **n. 3, F1**). If the cosmogony of Strasburg had to be placed before it, it would hardly find enough space in such a small section. One should hypothesize the existence of more than one roll for the hypothetical poem.

⁵⁷⁰ Cf. Roberto 2014, 169–170.

one, it is necessary to explain the reference to Antinous' death: Hermopolis is presented as the first city created by the gods, and that justifies its presence in the poem, but what about Antinopolis? What role does it have in the *fil rouge* moving from the creation to the Tetrarchic peace? According to Livrea, the poet presented Diocletian as "novello Zeus-Hermes e novello Antinoo garante della *felicitas temporum*" (2002, 21): from this point of view, Hadrian's lover would be a *figura* of Diocletian, a model transmitting his soteriologic function to the emperor. But how could the divine ephebe be a worthy parallel for an emperor like Diocletian? Concerning the second hypothesis, it is important to note that *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352 already contains a praise of the authorities: not only of Diocletian, but also of his Egyptian collaborators. The Persian lines should have another function.

A last point must be added. As already said, the poem on Antinopolis aims to reduce the importance of Hermopolis, that cumbersome neighbor of Hadrian's foundation.⁵⁷¹ How is it possible to place lines exalting the primacy of Antinopolis in a poem which presents Hermopolis as the most ancient city in the world? These remarks lead me to agree with the conclusion of Janiszewski: "if this were the Ἐγκώμιον εἰς Διοκλητιανόν by Soterichos, it would have been quite an extraordinary text" (2006, *loc. cit.*). Given the difficulties emerging from Livrea's hypothesis, it is better to consider the three papyri as fragments of different works.

Having separated the papyri of Strasburg from *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352, it is necessary to analyze the relationship between *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 480 and *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481. There are two main queries: are they part of the same work? If they are not, is it possible to attribute the lines on Diocletian and those on Hermopolis to a single author? As already stated, the two papyri were part of a single codex, written by the same hand. *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 480 preceded *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481, and was separated from it by some pages.⁵⁷² These elements have been taken by Livrea as evidence of the "appartenenza dei due frammenti ad un unico testo" (2002, 19). The scholar also highlighted the brevity of the cosmologic text, remarking that it seems too short to be an autonomous

⁵⁷¹ See the commentary to **n. 3 F6**, vv. 14–17.

⁵⁷² Cf. Malnati 1999, 102.

poem.⁵⁷³ Considering *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 as part of a lengthier poem is one of the two possibilities noted by Gigli Piccardi: as she pointed out, the idea of a longer composition would also involve the lines on the Persian campaign.⁵⁷⁴ The scholar declared her partiality to the other alternative that she proposed: reading the two papyri as testimonies of different works.⁵⁷⁵ I agree with her. The themes of the two compositions are quite distant, and it is difficult to integrate them. If the section about Hermes had been placed before the presentation of the Persian expedition, it would be possible to take into account the structure I mentioned above: a poem starting with the creation of the world and culminating with the Tetrarchic triumph. Unfortunately, the order of the two papyri was the reverse. *Rebus sic stantibus*, it is hard to consider the foundation of Hermopolis as a simple digression of a poem on the Persian war.

To sustain his thesis, Livrea quoted the paleography of the two papyri as evidence; along with it, he mentioned the similarities of language, metrics, and style.⁵⁷⁶ Some considerations are necessary. First of all, the paleographic evidence does not demonstrate anything about the author of the two fragments: it just shows that they have been copied by the same hand. It is not possible to determine if this hand corresponded to that of the author. Moreover, given the present state of the papyri, it is impossible to demonstrate that the copyist transcribed the verses because they belonged to the same work. In a similar way, the language, style, and meter do not necessarily imply belonging to a single poem: they can simply reveal the work of the same author (in some cases, not even that: see below). Concerning the length of the cosmologic text, it is impossible to know how many sheets of the codex have been lost, and how many lines of the poem are no longer available. The text could have been far longer than the modern reader expects. After having assigned the two fragments to different works, it is necessary to face the problem of their authorship.

⁵⁷³ Cf. 2002, 20.

⁵⁷⁴ Cf. 1990, 45.

⁵⁷⁵ Cf. 1990, 45–47.

⁵⁷⁶ Cf. 2002, 19–20.

The majority of the scholars attributed the two texts to the same author: Bidez linked them to Soterichus (with Wilamowitz's blessing), Keydell to an anonymous poet of Hermopolis, Livrea again to Soterichus. As already noted, this tendency is due to the stylistic similarities of the two texts: however, as Gigli Piccardi rightly noted, the same style does not necessarily reveal the same authorship, especially in late antiquity.⁵⁷⁷ Reitzenstein himself, who attributed both the papyri to the same author, took into account the possibility that they had been composed by two poets flourishing in the same period.⁵⁷⁸ Papyrus codices including poems of different authors are attested in late antique Egypt:⁵⁷⁹ the codex containing the two papyri could be one of them. The poem on Diocletian and that on the creation of the world could be the works of two different poets, put in the same volume because of their genre⁵⁸⁰, or for other reasons. It is possible too that they were written by the same author and then collected in a codex dedicated to his production (maybe with other texts). The state of the material does not allow us to reach a safe conclusion.

For the identification of the city, the most successful interpretation is that of Keydell, who referred the foundation to Hermopolis Magna. As I already said, he based his hypothesis on the πατρώϊος Ἑρμῆς of **F1**, v. 2 and on the Egyptian traditions concerning *Khmun*. I shall deal with the former aspect in the commentary to the verse. For the second one, the parallels between *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 and the cosmogony of *Khmun* can be confirmed. The city presented itself as the most ancient in the world, claiming to be placed on the original "blaze island", i.e. "le premier sol à sortir du Noun pour servir de berceau au maître universel" (Sauneron – Yoyotte 1959, 35). According to the Hermopolitan tradition, the Ogdoad – four pairs of primordial deities – created the Sun on this island, which derived its name from the

⁵⁷⁷ Cf. 1990, 45.

⁵⁷⁸ Cf. 1901, 58.

⁵⁷⁹ E.g. the so-called *Codex Visionum* (*P. Bodm.* 29–37 = *LDAB* 1106: cf. Miguélez Caverio 2013), and the *P. Vindob.* 29788 A–C (Page 140 = Heitsch 35 = *MP*³ 1334 = *LDAB* 3517: Gigli Piccardi 1990, 46; Miguélez Caverio 2008, 72–73).

⁵⁸⁰ As suggested by Fournet (1993, 254): «On voit par ailleurs se dessiner un dénominateur commun pour le contenu de ce codex : le genre de l'*encomium* selon la typologie ménandréenne».

episode.⁵⁸¹ The antiquity of Hermopolis is still highlighted under the Roman domination: between the third and the fourth centuries AD, the citizens address it as Ἑρμοῦπολις ἡ μεγάλη, ἀρχαία καὶ σεμνοτάτη, “the great, the ancient, and the most august Ermopolis”.⁵⁸² Its divine origin is taken by Menander Rhetor as a rhetorical topos.⁵⁸³ The city could be nimbly identified with the *Urstadt* of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481, were not for the following obstacle. The Hermopolitan claims of antiquity are not an isolated phenomenon. As Sauneron and Yoyotte wrote, “s’il est un theme commun à presque toutes les cosmogonies locales, c’est bien celui de la première terre émergée” (1959, 35): along with *Khmun*, other Egyptian cities identified themselves as this original land. The two scholars listed twelve of them: along with great centers such as Heliopolis and Thebes, their list also includes smaller cities such as Elephantine, Edfu, and Sais.⁵⁸⁴ The city of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 could be one of them.

To resolve the impasse, it is necessary to return to the papyrus and to its main character. The choice of Hermes as the founder of the city reveals a strong connection between the god and his creation: no Egyptian city had a greater connection to the Egyptian Hermes than Hermopolis Magna. The principal temple of Thoth was located there and the god himself was usually named the “Lord of *Khmun*”.⁵⁸⁵ These considerations confirm the hypothesis of Keydell: the nameless city created by Hermes and sung by the poet of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 should be identified with Hermopolis. The social and literary development of the city in late antiquity confirms the hypothesis.⁵⁸⁶

⁵⁸¹ The creation of the Sun by the Ogdoad is one of the original elements of what could be defined the «Hermopolitan cosmology»: indeed, the mythical systems of Heliopolis and Memphis – the principal alternatives to it – attributed the creation of the world to a «démurge autogène» (the Sun for the former, the Earth for the latter). The city of Thoth placed a preliminary level before the demiurge instead, and introduced the figure of the Ogdoad, a sort of «Proto-Démurge»: cf. Sauneron–Yoyotte 1959, 26–31, 51–54.

⁵⁸² Gigli Piccardi 1990, 20. Cf. Méautis 1918, 31–33.

⁵⁸³ Cf. Men. I 353 8–13. The passage shows how much known the myth of Hermopolis was out of Egypt: cf. Miguélez Caverio 2008, 64.

⁵⁸⁴ Cf. Sauneron–Yoyotte 1959, 35–36.

⁵⁸⁵ Cf. Boylan 1922, 148–151.

⁵⁸⁶ Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 25–29.

If the subject of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv. 481* is Hermopolis Magna, the hypothesis of Bidez identifying the poem as Soterichus' *Patria of Oasis* has to be rejected. The importance of the city in the economy of the poem is indubitable: as Gigli Piccardi remarked, the cosmogonical theme of the text "non è fine a se stesso, ma strettamente correlato alla fondazione di una città" (1990, 15). In all probability, we are dealing with *Patria of Hermopolis*, as suggested by Keydell. Regarding the identity of the author, the elements at our disposal are not enough for a secure determination. As stated above, the scholars proposed different names, from Antimachus of Heliopolis⁵⁸⁷ to Andronichus of Hermopolis.⁵⁸⁸ Unfortunately, it is not possible to verify these hypotheses. I prefer to follow what Janiszewski wrote in his analysis: "since the identification of the text from Strasbourg papyrus [...] is uncertain, I shall deal with P. Strasbourg 481 separately, as a work written by an anonymous author from Hermopolis" (2006, 226). I do not agree with only one point, namely the origin of the author: it was not necessary for him to be a citizen of Hermopolis. The sources mention many poets of this age moving from one center to another to write *patria* and other works.⁵⁸⁹ The author of the poem could have originated in another city, either Egyptian or of another province. While writing *patria* of Hermopolis, he supposedly adapted his poetic tools to the traditions of the city (see below). Although the idea of a foreign poet writing for Hermopolis is not impossible, I personally would refer the verses to the hand of an Egyptian author: the high level of Egyptian poetry in late antiquity and its diffusion between the Thebaid and the area of Alexandria make the Egyptian origin an attractive possibility.

As already mentioned, the first scholars dealing with *P. Stras. Gr. Inv. 481* focused on its Egyptian contents. Finding traces of Egyptian myths in the representation of the creation was the main interest of Reitzenstein. To contextualize the narrative of the papyrus, Keydell referred to the cultural *humus* of the Egyptian *Khmun*. Even Zieliński – who tried to move the setting of the poem from Egypt to the highlands

⁵⁸⁷ Cf. Wyss 1949, 194, n. 45.

⁵⁸⁸ Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 60–63.

⁵⁸⁹ The «wandering poets» of Cameron 2016, 1–35: cf. Miguélez Caverio 2008, 3–105. With all these poets, our author shared the lifestyle and the high cultural preparation (see below).

of Arcadia – did not change this perspective: considering the papyrus a product of the Hermetic school, he confirmed the Egyptian focus of his predecessors. Gigli Piccardi's commentary was the first to extensively approach the Greek background of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481: along with the influence of Hermetic, Chaldean, and Orphic doctrines, the scholar highlighted the great importance of Greek philosophers such as Empedocles, Plato, and the late Neoplatonists. I would concur: the undeniable presence of Egyptian elements must not erase the Greek aspects of our hexameters. If we take into account the trends of late antique imperial culture, we realize how very aware our author was of them. Let us consider the foundation of Hermopolis as an example. The poet glorifies the city by saying that it has been founded by a god (cf. **F1**, v. 2), at the beginning of the world's history (cf. **F2**, vv. 1–13), in order to receive the first rays of the sun (cf. **F2**, v. 14). Such a presentation reflects what the imperial rhetoric prescribed: we can verify that by reading some passages of Menander's handbook. In the first treatise, the rhetorician teaches πῶς δεῖ ἀπὸ γένους πόλιν ἐγχωμιάζειν, “how to celebrate a city under the head of origin”.⁵⁹⁰ Dealing with the figure of the founder, Menander writes: οἷον εὐθὺς εἰ τίς οἰκιστὴς ζητοῖμεν, εἰ θεός, εἰ ἥρω, εἰ ἄνθρωπος [...]. ἐὰν μὲν τοίνυν θεὸς ᾖ, μέγιστον τὸ ἐγκώμιον, ὥσπερ ἐπ' ἐνίων λέγεται, ὡς περὶ Ἑρμοῦπόλεως καὶ Ἡλιοῦπόλεως καὶ τῶν τοιούτων (“for instance, if we examine who the founder was, [we say] whether he was a god, a hero, or a man [...]. If therefore he was a god, the encomium is the highest; it is said of some cities, such as Hermopolis, Heliopolis and the like”). Some sentences after, the author notes: τρίτον ἔφαμεν τοῦ γένους εἶναι τὸν χρόνον, τρισὶ διαιρούμενον ὅροις· ἢ τῶν παλαιοτάτων, ὅταν ἢ πρὸ ἄστρον ἢ μετὰ τῶν ἄστρον φάσκωμεν, ἢ πρὸ κατακλυσμοῦ ἢ μετὰ κατακλυσμὸν φάσκωμεν οἰκισθῆναι ἢ πόλιν ἢ χώραν (“we said that ‘date’ is the third division of origin: it consists of three periods. The oldest, when we say that a city or a country was founded before the stars or with the stars or before the flood or after the flood”).⁵⁹¹ Then, he adds: αἰτίαι τοίνυν οἰκισμῶν πόλεων ἢ θεῖαι ἢ ἡρωϊκαὶ ἢ ἀνθρώπιναί [...]. θεῖα μὲν τοίνυν αἰτία ἐστίν, ὅποια περὶ Ῥόδου ἢ Δήλου (“therefore, the causes of city

⁵⁹⁰ Cf. Men. I 353, 4. See the general introduction (§ 2).

⁵⁹¹ Cf. Men. I 354, 22–25.

foundations are either divine, heroic, or human [...]. An example of a divine cause is provided by Rhodes and Delos”).⁵⁹² To summarize what Menander says, the reference to a god, to a great antiquity, and to a divine goal are some of the best rhetorical tools to glorify a city. As it is possible to see, they are all present in our poem.

The comparison between the author of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 and Menander’s handbook reveals a connection, but supposing that the former knew the latter is quite hazardous. Yet, we can hypothesize that the two writers emerged from (and belonged to) the same cultural context: in other words, that they had been trained and shaped in the same way. The rules ordered and listed by Menander were part of the rhetorical luggage of our poet: being asked to celebrate the origin of Hermopolis, he resorted to them. Such a connection with imperial culture is also confirmed by other sections of the papyrus: the narration of the creation, for instance, clearly reflects earlier models, such as Hesiod’s *Theogony* or Plato’s *Timaeus*: the primeval passage from chaos to order (cf. **F1**, v. 18–21), the mention of the original night (cf. **F2**, vv. 3–4), and the representation of the earth at the center of the universe (cf. **F2**, v. 32) demonstrate it. The dependence on a wider rhetorical tradition is even clearer in the long description of earthly zones (cf. **F2**, vv. 15–34). There, the choice of images is not original at all: in some cases, it even seems to contrast with the rest of the poem. As an example of that, one could quote the presentation of the temperate zone, where the poet introduces men and cities before their effective creation (cf. **F2**, v. 30–32). The high level of education of our poet is shown by his deep philosophical knowledge. The basic rhetorical training of the imperial age did not include philosophers: Plato and Xenophon were part of the program only because of the stylistic value of their writings. The others were engaged with by a few trainees in higher specialized courses.⁵⁹³ The multiple references to Empedocles, Aristotle, and many others in *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 demonstrate that our poet belonged to this narrower circle: he must have studied in an important center, such as Hermopolis itself or Alexandria.

⁵⁹² Cf. Men. I 357, 15–16, 20–21.

⁵⁹³ Cf. Miguélez Caveró 2008, 230–231.

Pointing out the Hellenistic background does not reduce the importance of the Egyptian one. Hermetic elements are disseminated everywhere in the poem and their influence on the author is hardly deniable.⁵⁹⁴ He could have belonged to one of the Hermetic groups whose presence is attested in late antique Egypt.⁵⁹⁵ Otherwise, we could think of an erudite poet who was designated to write the *patria* of Hermopolis and adapted his rhetorical and poetic skills to the syncretic culture of the city.⁵⁹⁶ Late antique *patria* celebrated the Roman cities developing their local tradition: our poet could have drawn from the Greco-Egyptian religious mélange of Hermopolis. The results of the operation are summarized by the figure of Hermes: on the one hand, he has the typical features of the Greek deity (such as the caduceus of **F1**, v. 4); on the other hand, he receives Hermetic attributes (e.g. the identification with the divine Nous: cf. **F1**, v. 2). Such a literary mixture resulted in a story which could be appreciated and understood not only by the local public, but also by a broader audience (even by the hypothetical public official listening to its public reading: cf. **F2**, vv. 37–45). Whatever the position of the poet was, he used the Egyptian material in the same way that he used the Hellenistic, i.e. to glorify his subject. The mission was successfully accomplished: the city of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 is not founded by a “simple” deity (such as the Greek Hermes), but by the eldest son of the supreme god, the second member of the divine trinity. This raises its importance. The literary syncretism of the anonymous poet corresponded to the religious syncretism of his subject: such an approach confirms him as a worthy precursor to Nonnus.

⁵⁹⁴ Cf. **F1**, vv. 1, 2, 10, 22–23, 26–27, 28, 29, 32, 35; **F2**, vv. 6–9, 37–45.

⁵⁹⁵ For an introduction to Egyptian Hermetism, see Fowden 1986.

⁵⁹⁶ For a brief presentation of Hermopolitan syncretism, cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 25–28.

Fragmenta

Πάτρια Ἑρμουπόλεως (?)

1

P. Stras. Gr. Inv. 481 Recto

ἐ]ξερύσας τινὰ μοῖραν ἔης πολυειδέος ἀλκῆς·
κεῖνος δὴ Νόος ἐστὶν ἐμὸς πατρῷος Ἑρμῆς.
τῷ μάλα πόλλ' ἐπέτελλε καμεῖν περικαλλέα κ[όσμον,
δῶκε δὲ οἷ ῥάβδον χρυσήν διακοσμήτειραν,
πάσης εὐέργοιο νοήμονα μητέρα τέχνης. 5
σὺν τῇ ἔβη Διὸς υἱὸς ἐοῦ γεν[ε]τῆρος ἐφετμήν
πᾶσαν ἵνα κρήνειν, ὃ δ' ἤμενος ἐν περιωπῇ
τέρπετο κυδαλίμου θηεύμενος υἱέος ἔργα.
αὐτὰρ ὁ θεσπεσίην φορέων τετράζυγα μορφήν
ὀφθαλμοῦ[ς κάμ]μυσε κ[εδα]ιομένης ὑπὲρ αἴγλης, 10
[αἴθερος εἴπε τε μῦθον·
]... [.]... [.]... ι πρόμος αἰθέρος . [.....] αὐτός
λη]γήμεναι προτέρης ἔριδος στοιχεῖ[α
ἀρ]μονίη πείθεσθε διακρίνεσθὲ δ[ὲ] νεῖκος.
λ]ωῖτέρη δέ τις ὕμμι συνήλυσι[ς 15
τεύξω γὰρ φιλότητα καὶ ἥμερον, [οἱ συνάγωσιν
ὕμέας ἀλλήλοισιν ἀρειοτέρη ἐπ[ὶ] μοίρη.
ὥς εἰπὼν χρυσὴν ῥάβδω θίγεν [·
εὐκῆλῳ δὲ τάχιστα κατείχετ[ο πάντα γαλήνη
παυσάμενα στοιχεῖα πολυφ[λοίσβου πολέμοιο. 20
ἔστε δ' εὐθὺς ἕκαστον ὀφειλ[ομένῳ ἐνὶ χῶρῳ
μαρμαρυγὴ δ... [.]...
δηναίης [·
αὐτὰρ ὁ παγγενέτα[ο θεοῦ *** υἱὸς
πρῶτα μὲν αἰγλήεντα
ἀρρήτῳ στροφάλιγγ[ι] π[α]λινδ[ί]νητον
οὐρανὸν ἐσφαίρωσε κατεστραφ[·
ἐπτά δέ μιν ζώναις διεκόσ[μεεν, ἐπτά
ἄστρον ἡγεμονῆς ἀλήμονε[ς

ἄλλου νέρ[τ]ερος ἄλλος, ἐπήτρ[ιμοι	30
πάντοθι δ' αἰθερίοι[ο πόλ]ου περὶ χ[
μέσσην γαῖαν ἔπ[η]ξ[εν] ἀκιν[η]τοῖς ἐνὶ δεσμοῖς	
ἐς δ' αἰθωνα νότον κρυμώ[δεα τ' ἄρκτον ἔτεινε	
λοξὸν ἀκινήτοιο [κ]αὶ ἡ[σύ]χ[ου ἄξονος οἶμον.	
καὶ πόντου κελάδογτος [	35
μαινομένην, ἀχάλινον, ἀγ[
ἀλλὰ μὲ[ν] εἰς ἓνα κόλπον ἀολ[λ	
μακραῖς ἡιόνεσσι χάραξε δ[
ἡ δὲ πολυπλάγκτων π [
νήχεται ἡπίριοιο κασιγνήτης ε[	40
ἄξονα δὲ σφίγγουσι δύω πόλοι [ἀμφοτέρωθεν	
.] . ομεναι [. .] ι . λ . . ι . περ[
]χ[ωρ]η παρακἑκλιτα[ι	
]χθαμαλ[ῆ]ν ε[
] . ου θινώδε[ος	45
]θον ὄλην [
] . . . [
. . .	

1. ἐ]ξερύσας : cum Reitzenstein || 3. κ[ό]σμον : cum Reitzenstein || 6. ἐοῦ : cum Gigli Piccardi | ἐ[οῦ] Reitzenstein || 9. φορέων : Π | έφορῶν Zieliński || 10. ὀφθαλμοῦ[ς : cum Reitzenstein || κάμ]μυσε : cum Kaibel | κατ]άμυσε Reitzenstein || κ[εδα]ιομένης : cum Livrea (qui et μ[ερι]ζομένης dub. prop.) | σκ[εδα]ζομένης sive κεδαζομένης Reitzenstein || 11.]αἰθέρος : cum Schwartz | ἔσσυτο δ' ἀτρυγέτοιο δι' [α]ιθέρος εἶπε τε μῦθον Livrea || 12.] . . [. .] . . [. ι πρόμος αἰθέρος . [.] αὐτός : Π | κέκλυτε *** αἰθέρος *** αὐτός Reitzenstein | ἀγλαὸν ἔργον ἔμο]ι πρόμος αἰθέρος [ῶ]πασεν αὐτός Gigli Piccardi e.g. || 13. λη]γήμεναι : cum Reitzenstein || στοιχεῖ[α : Π | στοιχεῖ[α κελεύει Reitzenstein | σ. κελεύω Treu | σ. γενέθλης Livrea || 14. ἀρ]μονίη : cum Keydell | δαι]μονίη Reitzenstein || δ[ε] νεῖκος : cum Keydell | (τ') [έφετμη Reitzenstein || 15. λ]ωῖτέρη : cum Reitzenstein || συνήλυσ[ις : σ. ἔσσετ' ἔπειτα Reitzenstein | σ. ἔσσεθ' ὁμαίοις Livrea || 16. ἥμερον, [οἱ συνάγωσιν : cum Gigli Piccardi | ἱ. [ἀμ]φίς ἐοῦσιν Reitzenstein || 17. ἀρειοτέρη ἐπ[ὶ μοίρη : cum Reitzenstein (vel ἄ. ἐπ[ὶ τάξει cum Gigli Piccardi) || 18. θίγεν [: θ. [ἀν]τυγα κόσμου West | θ. [ἄ]κριτον ὄγκον Gigli Piccardi | θ. [ἄ]στατον ὕλην Livrea | θ. [ἄ]κριτον ὕλην ego e.g. || 19. κατεῖχετ[ο πάντα γαλήνη : cum Reitzenstein || 20. πολυφ[λοῖσ]βου πολέμοιο : cum Gigli Piccardi | πολυφ[χι]δέων καταμιγῶν

Reitzenstein | πολυστ[όνου αὐτίκα νείκους Wifstrand | πολυστ[όνου αὐτίκα νείκους West || **21.** ὄφειλ[ομένω ἐνὶ χώρῳ : cum Reitzenstein || **22.** μαρμαρυγὴ δ . . . [.] . . . : Π | μαρμαρυγὴν *** Reitzenstein | μαρμαρυγὴ δ' ἦστ[ρ]απτ[ε Livrea || **23.** δηναίης : Π | δ. [δὲ διχοστασίης λάθετ' ἀρθμηθέντα Reitzenstein | δηναίης [φιλότητος Gigli Piccardi | δ. [φιλότητος ὑποξεύξασα λέπαδνον Livrea || **24.** παγγενέτα[ο θεοῦ *** υἱός : cum Heitsch | παγγενέτα[ο θεοῦ Reitzenstein | παγγενέτα[ο θεοῦ μάλα κύδιμος υἱός Livrea || **25.** αἰγλήεν[τα : cum Reitzenstein | αἰγλήεν[τα καὶ αἶθοπα πυρσὸν ἐλίσσων Gigli Piccardi e.g. | αἰγλήεν[τα δι' αἰθέρος οἶμον ὁδεύων Livrea || **26.** στροφάλιγγ[ι] π[α]λινδ[ι]νήτον : cum Reitzenstein vel -[νήτου cum Gigli Piccardi | σ. π. ἀνάγκην Reitzenstein | σ. π. ἀνάγκης Gigli Piccardi | σ. π[α]λιν[δ]ί[νητον ἔτευξεν Zieliński | σ. π[α]λιν[δ]ί[νητον ἐλίξας Livrea || **27.** κατέστραφ[ε : Π | κατέστραφ[ε τ' ἐς κλίσιν ἄρκτων West || **28.** διεκόσ[μεεν, ἐπτά : cum Gigli Piccardi | δ., ἐπτά δ' ἐπῆσαν Reitzenstein | δ., ἐπτά μάλ' αὐτως Livrea || **29.** ἡγεμονῆς ἀλήμονε[ς : cum Gigli Piccardi | ἡ. ἀ. ὡκὺ θεόντες Livrea | ἡ., ἄλλῃ ὦν [τείρεα δινεῖ Reitzenstein | ἡ., ἄλλῃ ὦν [μοῖραν ὑφαίνει Zieliński || **30.** νέρ[τ]ερος : cum Reitzenstein || ἐπήτρ[ιμοι : Π | ἐ. ἡλάσκοντες Reitzenstein | ἐ. ἡλάσκουσι Pack | ἐ. ἐστιχῶντο Livrea || **31.** αἰθερίοι[ο πόλ]ου περὶ χ[: Π | α. π. περὶ χ[άσμα τιταίνων dub. Heitsch | αἰθερίοι[ο ρό]ου π. χ. τ. Livrea | αἶθρον ὁμοῦ περὶ χ[Reitzenstein || **32.** ἔπ[η]ξ[εν] ἀκιν[ήτοις ἐνὶ δεσμοῖς : cum Reitzenstein || **33.** αἶθωνα νότον κρυμῶ[δεα τ' ἄρκτον ἔτεινε : cum Reitzenstein || **34.** [κ]αὶ ἡ[σύ]χ[ου ἄξονος οἶμον : cum Reitzenstein || **35.** κελάδογτος [: Π | κ. [ἀπείριτα κύματα χεύων Gigli Piccardi | κ. [.] . . . α [κ. χ. Livrea || **36.** ἀν[: Π | ἀν[ήρυγε ροῖζον ἀητῶν Gigli Piccardi e.g. | ἀνε[ρροίβδησεν ἰωήν Livrea || **37.** μέ[ν] εἰς ἕνα : cum Livrea | μέσαις ἕνα Reitzenstein || ὁολ[λ : cum Reitzenstein | ὁολ[λίζων vel ὁολ[λίσας dub. Gigli Piccardi | ὁολ[λίσας μάλα χερσί Livrea | ὁολ[λίζων vel ὁολ[λίσας μέλαν ὕδωρ ego e.g. || **38.** χάραξε δ[: Π | χ. δ[ιὰβροχα νῶτα Gigli Piccardi | χάραξ' ἔδ[ος ἡπεῖροιο Livrea || **39.** πολυπλάγκτων π [: Π | π. π . . . ιερῶ[*** θάλασσα Gigli Piccardi | π. μερό[πων ζείουσα θάλασσα Livrea || **40.** ε[: Π | ε[νὶ κόλπῳ Heitsch | ε[νὶ κόλποις Livrea || **41.** πόλοι [ἀμφοτέρωθεν : cum Reitzenstein || **43.**]χ[ωρ]η : cum Gigli Piccardi || παρακέκλιτα[ι : cum Reitzenstein || **44.**]χθαμαλ[ή]ν : cum Reitzenstein || ε[: Π | ἐ[π Reitzenstein || **45.**] . ου θινῶδε[ος : cum Gigli Piccardi |] . ου θινῶδε[ος αἰγιάλοιο Livrea |]ον θινῶδε Reitzenstein |]ον θιν . ὠδε Heitsch

[...] drawing a part of his multifarious strength out.

That is Nous, the Hermes of my fathers.

To him Zeus ordered in detail to shape a wonderful world

and gave him the organizing golden rod,

the intelligent mother of any beneficent art.

Zeus' son set out with it to accomplish the whole
 will of his father; the other sat on his observatory
 and rejoiced in watching the activities of the glorious son.
 Then, taking a divine fourfold form,
 he closed his eyes at the diffused light, 10
 [...] of ether and spoke:
 "[...] the lord of the ether [...] himself
 that the elements stop their past conflict.
 Surrender to harmony and solve your quarrel:
 a solution will be better for you [...]. 15
 I will create Love and Desire: they will bring you
 together to a better fate."
 Having said that, he touched with the golden rod [...]

and everything was quickly covered with a calm stillness,
 since the elements had stopped the loud-roaring war. 20
 Everything stood immediately in the necessary place
 [...] a flash [...]
 [...] of a long-lived [...]

But the son of the universal divine father [...] 25
 first of all, the dazzling [...]
 with an immense swirl, the whirling [...]
 he curved the sky and turned [...]
 and ordered it in seven zones, seven [...]
 [...] the wanderer lords of stars [...],
 thronged one under the other [...] 30
 from every side around the pole of ether [...].
 In the middle, he fixed the earth with immovable chains
 and stretched out to the burning south and the frozen north
 the slanting path of the immovable and quite axis.
 And [...] of the roaring sea 35
 crazy, unbridled [...].
 But [...] in a single gulf
 he cut [...] with long coasts.
 The [...] of much wandering [...],
 the sister of mainland, fluctuates [...] 40
 The two poles tie together the axis on both sides

[...]

The land lays beside [...]

[...] low [...]

[...] of the sandy [...]

[...] the whole [...]

[...]

45

2

P. Stras. Gr. Inv. 481 Verso

ούπ]ω κύκλος ξην Ὑπερίονος, οὐδὲ καὶ αὐτὴ
εἴλι]πόδων εὖ[[ρ]]'λ'ηρα βοῶν <έτίνασσε> Σελήνη,

νὺ]ξ δὲ διηνεκέως ἄτερ ἡματος ἔρρεε μούνη
ἄστρων λεπταλέησιν ὑπὸ στίλβουσα βολῆσι.

τὰ φρονέων πολιοῖο δι' ἡέρος ἔστιχεν Ἑρμῆς

5

οὐκ οἶος, σὺν τῷ γε Λόγος κίεν ἄγλαος υἱός

λαιψηραῖς πτερύγεσσι κεκασμένος, αἰέν ἀληθής,

ἀγνήν ἀτρεκέεσσιν ἔχων ἐπὶ χεῖλεσι πειθώ,

πατρώου καθαροῖο νοήματος ἄγγελος ὥκυσ.

σὺν τῷ ἔβη γαῖανδε με[*** χρυσόρραπς Ἑρμῆς

10

πάπταινε[ν δὲ ... ω . [.] αἰ
χῶρον [έύκρη]τον διζήμενος, ἔνθα πολίσση

ἄστρ . [.] . στον, ὃ κεν πεπολισμένον εἶη

ἄξιο[ν ἥελίοιο βολ]ήν εὐφεγγέα δέχθαι.

ἀλλ' [οὐ] ἐπὶ κρυμώδεας ἄρκτους

15

πα[.] μοίραι<ς> χθονὸς οὔνεκα κείναις

]θε βαθὺς περιπέπταται ἀήρ

παλ]υγόμενος νιφάδεσσι,

έκ]εῖ δ' ἐπενήνοθε πάχνη

θν]ητὸν δέμας· οὐδέ κεν αὖθι

20

] υ . [.] ... ης

] . . . ρος . [.] . ι

]λθε[.] . ἄλλη

]χίς[.] αἰ λαῶν

] . . υ . . . [.] φουσ[. . .]σα

25

περιπ]έπτα<τα>ι ἄσκιος ἀήρ

	]ε δύω κατὰ θεσμὸν ἕασι	
μεσσηγὺς	κ]αὶ ἀκρήτοιο θερείης	
	] αἰθομένῳ πυρὶ [γεῖ]των	
]σα πολυσπε[ρέω]ν [γέ]ν[ος] ἀνδρῶν		30
	]κλητοὶ . . γένοντο	
	κ]αὶ ἄστεα μοιρηθεῖσαι	
	] Ὀκ[ε]ανοῖο	
πολλῇσιν ἐπῶν[υ]μίησι δ[έ]δασται.		
	]οι, τῶν δέ τε μέσσ[ο]ς	35
λεχ]ωϊᾶς Ὠγυγίη χθ[ώ]ν		
	]ομαι οἷ ποτὶ π[. . .]	
	] τὸ δὲ κλέος οὐδεπ . . . θον[
] . ἀντιπέρηθεν ὀρούσας		
έ]υκτιμένη ἐνὶ Πυθοῖ		40
]θεοὶ μεγά[λοι] ρ[
]σαν ὅτ' ἐμ . . [
	] . υσι[.]ν . . . [
	]ης διζήμε[ν	
	] . με . [	45

...

1. ούπ]ω : cum Reitzenstein || 2. εἰλ]ιπόδων εὔ[[ρ]]'λήρα βοῶν <έτίνασσε> Σελήνη : cum Heitsch (qui εὔληρα pro εὔ[[ρ]]'λήρα scr.) | ε. <έτίνασσε> βοῶν εὔληρα Σ. Reitzenstein || 3. νὺ]ξ : cum Reitzenstein || 6. γε : cum Reitzenstein | δε Π || 10. γαῖάνδε με[*** χρυσόρραπις Ἑρμῆς : ego post Gigli Piccardi | γ. με[τ *** Ἐ. Reitzenstein | γ. με[χρ]ι [χρυσόρραπις Ἐ. Gigli Piccardi | γ. με[νε]ι[ν χ. Ἐ. Livrea || 11. πάπτεινε[ν δὲ : cum Gigli Piccardi | παπτ[αίνων] Reitzenstein || 12. [έ]υκρη]τον : cum Reitzenstein || 13. ἄστν . [.] . στον : Π | μεγ' ήδ' ἄσβε]στον vel μέγ' ήδὲ κύδι]στον (vel περικλή]ϊστον) Gigli Piccardi || 14. ἄξιο[ν ήελίοιο βολ]ήν ἐυφεγγέα δέχθαι : cum Gigli Piccardi (qui et αἴγλ]ην pro βολ]ήν dub. prop.) | ἄ. ή. μορφ]ήν έ. δ. Heitsch || 15. [ού : cum Reitzenstein | [ού δή μιν ἔκαμνεν Gigli Piccardi e.g. || 16. πα[.] : Π | πα[χνωσάσης ἐν] ego e.g. | μοίραι<ς> : corr. Reitzenstein || 18. παλ]υγόμενος : cum Livrea | βα]ρυγόμενος Reitzenstein || 19. ἐκ]εῖ δ' : cum Gigli Piccardi | οὔλ]η δ' Reitzenstein || 20. θν]ητόν : cum Reitzenstein || 21. . . ιης : Π | γαῖης Reitzenstein || 23.]θε[. . . ἄλλ]η : cum Gigli Piccardi | θε . . . ἀλ]η Reitzenstein | λθε χα]α . η Schwartz || 24.]χ]ις[.]αι λαῶν : cum Schwartz | ρά]χ]ις [.]αι]λαων dub. Gigli Piccardi |]χ]ις[.]αι]λαῶν Livrea |]λ]ις . . . λαων Reitzenstein || 25. φυσ[. . .]σα : cum Schwartz |

φυσ[ιόω]σα Gigli Piccardi |]φυσ[Heitsch || **26.** περιπ[έ]πτα<τα>ι : cum Gigli Piccardi | πέπταται dub. Reitzenstein || **27.** θεσμὸν : cum Gigli Piccardi | κόσμον Reitzenstein | βασμὸν Schwartz || **28.** μεσσηγὺς *** κ]αὶ ἀκρήτοιο : cum Gigli Piccardi | κ]αὶ ἄ. Reitzenstein || **29.** [γεί]των : cum Gigli Piccardi | γ[εί]των Reitzenstein || **30.** πολυσπε[ρέω]ν [γέ]ν[ος] : cum Gigli Piccardi | πολυσπε[ρέων γένος] Reitzenstein | πολυσπερ[ε]ων γένος Schwartz || **31.**]κ]λητοι : cum Heitsch | πολύ]κ]λητοι δὲ West | κλητι Reitzenstein || **32.** κ]αὶ : cum Reitzenstein | μοιρηθεῖσαι : cum West | μοιρηθεῖσαι Heitsch | χ]ωρηθεῖσαι Reitzenstein || **33.** Ὡκ[ε]ανοῖο : cum Heitsch | Ὡκ[ε]ανοῖο Reitzenstein | ῥόος] Ὡ. Gigli Piccardi | σθένος] Ὡ. ego e.g. || **34.** ἐπ[ω]ν[υ]μήσι δ[έ]δασται : cum West |]ν[υ]μήσι δ[έ]δασται Heitsch | πολλῇσιν ἐπ[ω]ν[υ]μήσι δ[έ]δασται Gigli Piccardi | νομῆσιν [έ]δοσεν Reitzenstein | νύμφαις νομῆσιν ἔδοσεν Zieliński || **35.** μέσσ[ο]ς : cum Gigli Piccardi | [μ]έσσος Reitzenstein | μέσσ[η] Heitsch || **36.** χθ[ώ]ν : cum Gigli Piccardi (post χ[θών] Wilamowitz) | [Νεῖλος, ζωογόνον δὲ λεχ]ωῖᾱς Ὡγυγίη χ[οῦ]ν / [δέκτο] Reitzenstein e.g. | Ν., τῷ μερόπεςσι λ. Ὡ. χθ[ώ]ν / ἄρδεται Livrea e.g. || **37.**]ομαι : cum Reitzenstein | θομαι Schwartz | πεί]θομαι Gigli Piccardi | εὐχ]ομαι ego e.g. || ποτὶ : cum Schwartz | ποτ Reitzenstein || π[. . .] : cum Gigli Piccardi | π[. . .] Schwartz || **38.** οὐδεπ . . . θον[: cum Gigli Piccardi | οὐδέ τις αἴθων Livrea || **40.** ἐ]υκτιμένη ἐνὶ Πυθοῖ : cum West | ν]υκτὶ δ' ἐγηγν . π . θοι Reitzenstein || **41.**]θεοὶ μεγά[λοι] ρ[: cum Gigli Piccardi | μεγαλ[.]ρ Schwartz | θεον . . . αι Reitzenstein || **42.** εμ : cum Schwartz | ομ West | . . Reitzenstein || **43.**] . υσι[.]ν : cum Heitsch | χ]ρυσσι[ο]ν West |]ρυσί[η]ν Livrea | ουσιν Reitzenstein || . . . [: cum Heitsch | ἱερήν[Livrea | ἱερ West | ρ Schwartz || **44.** διζημε[ν : cum Schwartz | διζημεν[Heitsch | διζημ Reitzenstein || **45.** με : cum Schwartz

The circle of Hyperion was not there yet, nor
did Selene agitate the reins of the cows, which roll in their gait;
the night alone flowed continuously without the day
shining under the delicate light of the stars.
Meditating these things, Hermes went through the gray air. 5
He was not alone: with him went the noble son Logos,
adorned with light wings, always true,
equipped with holy persuasion on the precise lips,
fast messenger of his father's clear project.
With him Hermes, the god with the golden wand, arrived up to the earth: 10
he looked around [...],
seeking a tempered place, where he could found
a [...] city, which could be built

worthy of receiving the brilliant rays of the sun.	
But he did not [...] in the frozen north:	15
because of the [...] land in those regions,	
[...] hazy air spreads.	
[...] get(s) covered with snowflakes	
[...] there the hoar heaps	
[...] the mortal body. Nor there would	20
[...]	
[...]	
[...] to another [...]	
[...] of people	
[...]	25
[...] the shadowless air spreads.	
[...] are two according to the Law	
between the [...] and the absolute summer.	
[...] neighbor to the burning fire.	
[...]	30
[...]	
[...]	
[...] of the Ocean	
[...] is divided among many names.	
[...] in the middle of them	35
[...] the fruitful land of Ogygia	
[...] (to) him	
[...] the glory [...]	
[...] rising from the other side	
[...] in Pytho, good to dwell in	40
[...] the great gods [...]	
[...]	
[...]	
[...]	
[...]	45

Commentary

F 1

Source date: fourth / fifth century AD.

v. 1. ἐξερύσας τινὰ μοῖραν ἔης πολυειδέος ἀλκῆς: the verse originally concluded a sentence, the first part of which has been lost. The subject is revealed in lines 6–8: the poet is describing the god Zeus separating from a part of his almighty power. As the following lines show, the result of the process is Hermes, i.e. the personification of the divine intellect: the supreme god entrusts him with the charge of shaping the world (see below). The poet's choice of words is particularly interesting, because it sheds light on his composite cultural background (or that of the city addressed in his composition). Traditionally used to represent war situations,⁵⁹⁷ the epic verb ἐξερύω ("to draw out of") is here inserted in a completely different context. Its attribution to Zeus echoes the Neoplatonic doctrines referring the creation of the world to a process of emanation from the One.⁵⁹⁸ Hermes, the organizer of the primeval chaos, is presented as a μοῖρα of Zeus. While drawing inspiration from the Neoplatonic idea, the poet partially alters it. As Gigli Piccardi noted, Plotinus and his followers thought that the One remained undivided while emanating the reality: this is not the case with the Zeus of our poem, who deprives himself of a part of his energy.⁵⁹⁹ Hermes originates from him, but is autonomous and self-sufficient. This aspect is confirmed by the verb: even if it echoes Neoplatonic verbs such as ἐκθρόσκω ("to leap out of"), it still carries the idea of something stabbed in an extraneous body, which must be drawn out of there. Along with a Neoplatonic *humus*, we can make reference to other cultural traditions. The poet defines Zeus' power πολυειδέος ἀλκή ("multiform strenght"). As Gigli Piccardi highlighted, the substantive

⁵⁹⁷ E.g. Hom. *Il.* V 112, XIII 532; XVI 505; XXXIII 870. See also Apoll. Rhod. II 1039; QS I 654; III 27, 84, 318; V 375; IX 173; XI 391.

⁵⁹⁸ See, for instance, Plot. *Enn.* III 8,10; III 4, 3, 26–27.

⁵⁹⁹ Cf. 1990, 87.

ἄλκή is frequently attributed to gods by the Chaldean oracles.⁶⁰⁰ Concerning the preceding adjective, the idea of a polymorphic manifestation of the deity is attested by Orphic, Hermetic, Dionysian, and even Christian texts.⁶⁰¹

v. 2. κείνος δὲ Νόος ἐστὶν ἐμὸς πατρώϊος Ἑρμῆς: the second line introduces Hermes, identifying him with the divine Νόος (“Intellect”). This element is quite interesting. According to Gigli Piccardi, it is rooted in the earlier Greek tradition, which identified the god with the Λόγος: the writings of Seneca,⁶⁰² Justin,⁶⁰³ Augustine⁶⁰⁴ and Eusebius⁶⁰⁵ provide some examples of this. The divine Λόγος also appears in our poem: however, it is not identified with Hermes, but presented as his son (cf. **F2**, v. 6). Such a connection creates a divine trio of characters: Zeus, Hermes, and the Λόγος. This is one of the bases of Zieliński’s hypothesis. As already discussed, the scholar rejected the Egyptian setting of our poem and substituted an Arcadian one.⁶⁰⁶ When analyzing the three divine figures of the fragment, he pointed out their mixed character: two of them are *stricto sensu* mythical (Zeus and Hermes), whereas the Λόγος is “une puissance métaphysique” (1941, 66). He interpreted this composite trinity as an intermediate level between the Arcadian triad composed of Zeus, Hermes, and Pan and that of the Hermetic treatise *Poimandres* (Νοῦς, Νοῦς Δεμιουργός, and Λόγος).⁶⁰⁷ The transition from Pan to the Logos finds an explanation in a passage of Plato’s *Cratylus*, where the philosopher links the double nature of Pan to the double form

⁶⁰⁰ Cf. *O.C.* FF 1, 3; 2, 2; 32, 4; 49, 1; 82, 2; 117; 118, 2; 214, 4 des Places. Like part of the Hermetic doctrine, also the *Chaldean Oracles* present interesting similarities with our poem: see, for instance, the idea of a divine trinity (Πατήρ, Δύναμις, and Λόγος: cf. *O.C.* FF 3, 5, 7, 8 des Places), or that of Love maintaining the world (cf. *O.C.* F 39 des Places): for a proper introduction to the work and to its contents, see Seng 2009–2010.

⁶⁰¹ For a complete list of references, see Gigli Piccardi 1990, 88–89.

⁶⁰² *De Ben.* IV 8, 1.

⁶⁰³ *Apol.* I 21–22.

⁶⁰⁴ *Civ. Dei* VII 14.

⁶⁰⁵ *Praep. Ev.* III 1, 1; 114 c–d.

⁶⁰⁶ See the Introduction.

⁶⁰⁷ Cf. *Poim.* 9. For an introduction to the text, see Holzhausen 2006.

of speech.⁶⁰⁸ To summarize, our poem would then be considered an early product of the Hermetic philosophy, written in Egypt to commemorate the Peloponnesian origin of the doctrine.⁶⁰⁹ Such a teleological interpretation is disputable for two reasons at least. First, it wrongly takes the *Poimandres* as a summary of Hermetic cosmology, whereas the *Corpus Hermeticum* is characterized by a wide variety of systems.⁶¹⁰ Second, it considers the figure of Logos as a philosophical one. As Gigli Piccardi highlighted, this is not true: the Logos of our poem is a well-defined mythological personification, provided with the same autonomy of action given to Hermes.⁶¹¹ Given this mythical characterization, considering *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 an intermediate step between a mythological triad and a metaphysical one is not convincing. To sustain his interpretation, Zieliński pointed out two other elements: the important role of Hermes in the creation of the world and the reference to the fruitful Ὠγγυγή, which need not necessarily refer to Egypt. I will discuss the latter point later (cf. **F2**, v. 36). For the moment, I shall anticipate the result of my analysis: although not impossible, the argument does not provide solid evidence for the hypothesis. Concerning the former element, the analysis of line 2 is quite important. After identifying Hermes with the divine Νόος, the poet defines him ἐμὸς πατρώϊος, “(Hermes) of my fathers”: the use of the adjective implicates a strict connection between the poetic voice (which does not necessarily corresponds to that of the poet: see below) and the god. Zieliński interpreted this proximity as a trace of the Arcadian religion.⁶¹² The strong connection between Hermes and the Peloponnesian region is demonstrated by a fragment of Aeschylus’ *Psychagogoi*, ironically quoted by Aristophanes: Ἑρμᾶν μὲν πρόγονον τίομεν γένος οἱ περὶ λίμναν, “we, the race by the lake, pay homage to our ancestor

⁶⁰⁸ Cf. 408c. See 1941, 66–67.

⁶⁰⁹ Cf. Zieliński 1941, 66–67.

⁶¹⁰ Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 31: «il *Poimandres* non può essere preso [...] come rappresentativo dell’ideologia ermetica: questa in realtà si presenta irriducibile ad ogni sforzo unitario di coerenza, anche sul versante cosmogonico e se nel *Poimandres* compaiono a protagonisti della creazione il primo Nous, il Nous demiurgo e il Logos, in Ascl. 19 la prima entità cosmogonica è Zeus».

⁶¹¹ Cf. 1990, *loc. cit.*

⁶¹² Cf. 1941, 65.

Hermes”.⁶¹³ According to a scholium, this line is sung by the Arcadians, who refer to Hermes as their forefather.⁶¹⁴ Zieliński made a parallel between the line of Aeschylus and the ἐμὸς πατρώϊος Ἑρμῆς of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481: like the former one, the latter text involves “un descendant d’Hermès” (1941, 65). A remark must be inserted here. The adjective πατρώϊος normally refers to something coming or inherited from the father(s), not to the fathers themselves.⁶¹⁵ Therefore, when the author of the poem defines the son of Zeus ἐμὸς πατρώϊος Ἑρμῆς, he does not present himself as descendant of Hermes, but reveals that he has inherited the cult of the god from his ancestors. This invalidates the parallel with Aeschylus’ fragment – which explicitly addresses Hermes as πρόγονος (“ancestor”) – and with the Arcadians who should have recited it. To conclude, the hypothesis of Zieliński can be put aside. Before the Polish philologist, the same passage had been analyzed by Reitzenstein. In his study on Aion’s mythology (1921), he noted many similarities between the poem of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 and a passage of Nonnus concerning the origin of Berytus.⁶¹⁶ On the basis of these resemblances, he interpreted the papyrus as a text concerning the foundation of the Phoenician city. The hypothesis will be analyzed and discussed later (cf. **F2**, vv. 12–14): for now, we should focus only on Reitzenstein’s reading of ἐμὸς πατρώϊος Ἑρμῆς. The scholar found a similar expression in Oppian: Ἑρμεία, σὺ δέ μοι πατρώϊε, “Ermes, you god of my ancestors”.⁶¹⁷ Since a scholium to the passage explains the reference to Hermes as a sign of Cilician origin, he suggested interpreting the papyrus’ line in the same way: “vielleicht stammt also der unbekannte Dichter ebendaher” (1921, 182, n. 2). Some remarks must be made. Nothing in *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 demonstrates that the poetic voice and the author himself coincided: given the public character of late antique poetry, it is more likely that the former outdid the latter.⁶¹⁸ The πατρώϊος Ἑρμῆς has to be referred to the poetic voice: it does not give information about the poet. Therefore, either the poetic

⁶¹³ Cf. *Batr.* 1266.

⁶¹⁴ Cf. *Schol. vet. Ar. Ran.* 1266; Zieliński 1941, 114–117.

⁶¹⁵ Cf. *LSJ*, 1349.

⁶¹⁶ Cf. *D.* XLI 51–154.

⁶¹⁷ Cf. *Hal.* III 9.

⁶¹⁸ Cf. Agosti 2012, 377–380.

voice was Cilician (that is to say: the entire work was dedicated to a Cilician subject), or the connection with Oppian and his lexical choices is less important than Reitzenstein thought. In the absence of any other reference to a Cilician setting, the latter possibility looks more reliable. An interesting parallel to our line has been found by Keydell in a Hermopolitan papyrus of the third century AD: reporting the proceedings of the local assembly, it evokes the name τοῦ [πατρῶου] ἡμῶν θεοῦ τρισεγίστου Ἑρμοῦ, “of Hermes Trismegistus, the god of our fathers”.⁶¹⁹ Such a testimony links the adjective πατρῶιος to an urban dimension, making it plausible that the poetic voice is speaking for an urban collectivity. As already stated in the introduction, the reference was used by Keydell to identify this collectivity with the citizens of Hermopolis Magna (the Egyptian *Khmun*): according to the scholar, the poet of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 addresses Hermes as the tutelary deity of the city.⁶²⁰ Although Gigli Piccardi sustained Keydell’s identification, she noticed that the adjective πατρῶιος does not necessarily indicate a city founded by Hermes, but could simply implicate a city with a sanctuary of the god.⁶²¹ In spite of this lexical ambiguity, an inscription of Side – a city of Minor Asia, which was founded at the behest of the Oracle of Delphi⁶²² – seems to confirm the interpretation of Keydell: it presents Apollo as θεὸς πατρῶος κτίστης, “the divine founder of our homeland”.⁶²³ If we connect our poem with the city of Hermopolis, we can easily explain the choice of Hermes as the protagonist of it: according to the Egyptian tradition, the city of *Khmun* was founded by the god Thot, traditionally considered the local *alter ego* of Hermes.⁶²⁴ If the poet wrote for the citizens of Hermopolis, he was referring to their tutelary deity: therefore, the use of πατρῶος is not surprising at all.

v. 3. τῷ μάλα πόλλ’ ἐπέτελλε καμῆν περικαλλέα κ[όσμον]: the first hemistich is attested in a passage of the *Iliad*, where the poet describes

⁶¹⁹ Cf. Wessely 1905, 125 (= *TM* 18713); cf. Meautis 1918, 175–176.

⁶²⁰ Cf. 1936, 465–467.

⁶²¹ Cf. 1990, 90–91.

⁶²² Cf. Paus. III 22, 12.

⁶²³ Cf. 4 Nallé.

⁶²⁴ Cf. Boylan 1922, 148–151.

Agamemnon's orders to his squire Eurymedon.⁶²⁵ It recurs – in a slightly different form – in two other verses of the *Odyssey*, which cite Circes' instructions to Odysseus and his mariners.⁶²⁶ In all these passages, the poet does not use the expression μάλα πόλλ' ἐπιτέλλειν only to represent an order, but also the urgent character of it. The same can be said for our line. By choosing the Homeric formula, the anonymous author shows the importance of Zeus' order, highlighting its gravity. The hemistich is followed by the aorist infinitive of κάμνω, "to work, to build". As Gigli Piccardi pointed out, the use of this verb characterizes the creation of the world as an artisanal operation. Such a lexical choice reflects the influence of late antique Neoplatonism (both pagan and Christian), which represented the divine demiurge as an artisan (τέκνων, τεχνίτης).⁶²⁷ The same scholar noted that the verb could also refer to the foundation of cities.⁶²⁸ Given the traditional connection between the structure of the city and that of the universe, such a use is not surprising.⁶²⁹ The final integration (κ[όσμον] was proposed by Reitzenstein⁶³⁰ and accepted by all successive editors.⁶³¹ Its reliability is confirmed by the following line: in order to create a wonderful κόσμος (= universal order), Zeus provides his son with a "ordering rod" (ῥάβδον [...] διακοσμήτειραν: see below).

v. 4. δῶκε δὲ οἱ ῥάβδον χρυσήν διακοσμήτειραν: the image of a golden rod likely evokes one of the symbols of Hermes, the caduceus (κηρύκειον).⁶³² In the Greek literature, it makes its first appearance in

⁶²⁵ Cf. IV 229.

⁶²⁶ Cf. IV 229, 273.

⁶²⁷ Cf. 1990, 92. The image is already in Plato: cf. Luis 1945, 170–171. A similar view of the creation is present also in the Egyptian culture: cf. Sauneron – Yoyotte 1959, 40–41 (in this case, the idea concerns only the creation of human beings).

⁶²⁸ Cf. Apoll. Rhod. I 1322.

⁶²⁹ Cf. 1990, 93: «l'uso di questo verbo [...] evoca il paragone, comune in ambito stoico e ormai scontato in età imperiale, fra la πόλις e il cosmo».

⁶³⁰ 1901, 53.

⁶³¹ Cf. Jacoby (*FGrHist* 637, F1); Page 1941, 546; Heitsch 1963, 82; Gigli Piccardi 1990, 67, 93; Livrea 2002, 22; Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, F1).

⁶³² For an introduction to the symbol and its uses, see Tyson 1932. Livrea (2002, 21) linked Hermes' rod to the scepter of Diocletian (cf. **n. 3, F6**, v. 36): such a connections should prove the link between *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 and *P.*

the Homeric hymn to Hermes, which introduces it as a gift from Apollo.⁶³³ The lines are particularly interesting. The tool is described as περικαλλέα ῥάβδον / χρυσεῖην τριπέτηλον (“marvelous golden rod, with three branches”).⁶³⁴ As it is possible to see, the hymn includes the adjective περικαλλής (“very beautiful”), which is used by the poet of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 to describe the universe in line 3 (see above). Since the word is quite widespread in Homeric (or Pseudo-Homeric) compositions,⁶³⁵ its presence in a late antique poem should not surprise us: it was part of a poetic vocabulary shared by epic poets.⁶³⁶ It must be noted, though, that its use in this specific context could reveal something more. Both texts present the origins of Hermes’ instrument: in the former text, the god receives it from Apollo, in the latter from Zeus. One could reasonably suppose that the poet of the papyrus knew the illustrious precedent and consciously made reference to it while writing his composition. In both stories, the rod is used to bring peace: between Hermes and Apollo in the hymn; between the fighting element in our poem (see below). The ability to bring order and peace was one of the main features of Hermes’ caduceus.⁶³⁷ Taking this aspect into account, we can analyze the meaning of the final διακοσμήτειραν. The adjective is hapax: as Gigli Piccardi remarked, it shares its root with words such as διακοσμέω (“to order, to regulate”), διακόσμησις (“regulation”), διάκοσμος (“setting in order”), and διακοσμητικός (“regulative”). All these words enjoyed an abundant philosophical use in late antiquity, being chosen to describe the cosmic order.⁶³⁸ The meaning of our adjective belongs to the same semantic area. Given the linguistic role of the suffix -τειρος, which normally refers to the agent of an action, I adopted the translation “which brings order, regulator”. Gigli Piccardi

Oxy. LXIII 4352, but it is not plausible. See the introduction for a discussion of Livrea’s hypothesis.

⁶³³ Cf. *H. Merc.* 527–531.

⁶³⁴ *H. Merc.* 528–529.

⁶³⁵ E.g. *Il.* I 603; III 262, 312, 396, 421; IV 486; etc. *Od.* I 153, 425; II 117; III 1; etc.

⁶³⁶ Just to make an example, it is frequently used by Quintus of Smyrna: cf. I 619; II 146; III 680; IV 54, 94, 104, etc.

⁶³⁷ Cf. Tyson 1932, 495.

⁶³⁸ Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 94.

proposed a more specific version, attributing a final nuance to the word (“per ristabilire l’ordine”).⁶³⁹

v. 5. πάσης εύεργοιο νοήμονα μητέρα τέχνης: the poet continues the presentation of Hermes’ rod. He describes it as the “intelligent mother of every beneficent art”. The characterization of the rod confirms the civilizing role of its owner: Hermes / Thot has always been connected to artistic and technical activities.⁶⁴⁰ Even in our poem, the very fact that he founds a city (= one of the typical functions of a civilizing god/hero) confirms this direction. The choice of the words is quite interesting. The adjective εύεργός (“beneficent, serviceable”) is not common in epic poetry.⁶⁴¹ From a metrical point of view, the presence of two accents in the same word (εύεργοιο) slows down the rhythm of the line, which speeds up in the second half of the verse. Next, the adjective νοήμων (“intelligent”) is semantically linked to the concept of νόημα, “thought, perception, idea”. As Gigli Piccardi observed, the peculiar attribution of the word to an inanimate object intends to show the divine intelligence lying in it.⁶⁴² Nonnus makes the same use of the adjective in his poem: that provides another trace of his connection with the poetical culture of his age.⁶⁴³

v. 6. – 7. σὺν τῇ ἔβῃ Διὸς υἱὸς ἐοῦ γεν[ε]τῆρος ἐφετμήν / πᾶσαν ἵνα κρήνειεν: as already said, the references to the “son of Zeus” and the “order of the parent” – along with the mention of “the son’s actions” of line 8 – allow us to identify the subject of the first verse of the fragment (see above). As Reitzenstein noted in the *editio princeps* of the poem, the structure of the period echoes that of some Homeric lines.⁶⁴⁴ The substantive ἐφετμή (“order”) is quite frequent in epic works, above all at the end of the line.⁶⁴⁵ Gigli Piccardi rightly connected the reinforcing adjective πᾶσαν to the μάλα πόλλα of line 3: the intensity of

⁶³⁹ Cf. 1990, 81.

⁶⁴⁰ Cf. Černý 1948; Fowden 1986.

⁶⁴¹ Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 96.

⁶⁴² Cf. 1990, 96–97.

⁶⁴³ Cf. *D.* III 127; IV 310; XLI 227.

⁶⁴⁴ Cf. *Hom. Il.* II 37; V 508; XXIII 451. See Reitzenstein 1901, 53.

⁶⁴⁵ Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 97.

Zeus' command is balanced by the intensity of Hermes' movement; he hurries with the rod to accomplish the entire mission his father had given him.⁶⁴⁶

vv. 7. – 8. ὁ δ' ἤμενος ἐν περιωπῇ / τέρπετο κυδαλίου θεεύμενος υἱέος ἔργα: the high observatory of Zeus is a literary *topos* since the time of the *Iliad*. I shall just mention the fourteenth scroll of the poem, which represents the king of the gods staring at the battle between Greeks and Trojans from the top of the mount Ida.⁶⁴⁷ Our passage was quoted by Wyss as a proof of the connection between the author of the papyrus and Gregory of Nazianzus.⁶⁴⁸ When presenting the creation of the world, the latter writes: ἀθρήσας τότ' ἔπειτα καὶ ἄρμενα πάντα νοήσας, / τέρπετο Παιδὸς ἄνακτος ὁμοφρονέουσιν ἐπ' ἔργοις ("then, [God] observed and apprehended all the implements: he rejoiced for the actions his Son, the Lord, had done following his mind").⁶⁴⁹ At first sight, the two texts look very similar. In both cases, there is a father watching his son doing his homework and rejoicing at the results. But, in spite of the similarities, a direct connection between the two poems (or, more generally, between their authors) cannot be confirmed. In this case, for example, a couple of elements should be highlighted. The most superficial concerns the timing of the two composition: in the papyrus, Zeus rejoices for the ἔργα of Hermes before the shaping of the world; in Gregory's lines, this moment arrives after the creation. But there is more. The Christian background of Gregory must be taken into account: it can explain his compositional choices, even those (apparently) coming from *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481. The image of God enjoying the creation could be linked directly to the Bible: Genesis exalts the satisfaction of the Creator contemplating his work.⁶⁵⁰ The representation of God's Παῖς shaping the world comes from Christian Trinitarian doctrines. In his letter to the Colossians, Paul speaks of Christ's nature and writes: ὃς ἐστὶν εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου, πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως, ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ ἐκτίσθη τὰ πάντα ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς [...] τὰ πάντα

⁶⁴⁶ Cf. 1990, *loc. cit.*

⁶⁴⁷ Cf. *Il.* XIV 157.

⁶⁴⁸ Cf. 1949, 194, n. 45.

⁶⁴⁹ Greg. Naz. *Carm.* 528, 4–5.

⁶⁵⁰ Cf. *Genesis* 1:31.

δι' αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν ἔκτισται ("he is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him everything was created in heaven and on earth [...], all things have been created through him and for him").⁶⁵¹ In a similar style, the prologue of John's gospel introduces the divine Λόγος noting that πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο ("everything was made through Him").⁶⁵² Given these neotestamentary references, Jesus' involvement in the creation of the world should not surprise us: before Gregory – just to quote two examples –, Origen mentioned the idea in his *Homilies on Genesis*⁶⁵³ and Jerome discussed it in the *Hebrew Questions on Genesis*.⁶⁵⁴ To conclude: in order to explain the compositional choices of Gregory, there is no need to quote the papyrus of Strasbourg as a source. The lines of the Cappadocian father can be understood without referring to it. Finally, for the adjective κυδάμιος ("glorious, renown"), Gigli Piccardi noted that it is mainly used by Homer as a heroic epithet.⁶⁵⁵

v. 9. αὐτὰρ ὁ θεσπεσίην φορέων τετράζυγα μορφήν: the line opens the section by describing Hermes' deeds. The god is presented while taking / carrying a "divine fourfold form" (θεσπεσίην [...] τετράζυγα μορφήν). According to Gigli Piccardi, the passage depicts the "trasformazione in senso cosmico di Hermes, che diventa Pantheos" (1990, 99): this cosmic transformation is described as a sort of priestly consecration.⁶⁵⁶ Following Reitzenstein,⁶⁵⁷ the scholar highlighted that the adjective τετράζυξ ("fourfold") is used by Nonnus as an attribute of the universe,⁶⁵⁸ being linked to the doctrine of the four elements.⁶⁵⁹ Similar references – she added – can be found in the hymn of *P. Argent.*

⁶⁵¹ Cf. *Colossians* 1:15–16.

⁶⁵² *John* 1:3.

⁶⁵³ Cf. *Hom. in Gen.* I 1.

⁶⁵⁴ This Christian doctrine was influenced also by the Jewish theology: according to some Jewish texts, the Torah was the personification of God's Wisdom and helped the Creator in doing his work. When the universe was created, she stated her sit in Jerusalem: cf. Parrish 1990, 183.

⁶⁵⁵ Cf. 1990, 99. For a different use of the adjective, cf. **n. 5, T1.**

⁶⁵⁶ Cf. 1990, 101–102.

⁶⁵⁷ Cf. 1901, 53.

⁶⁵⁸ Cf. *D.* VI 99; XII 169; *Par.* III 82.

⁶⁵⁹ Cf. 1990, 99–100.

Gr. 1179 v^o and in the alchemical writings of Zosimus of Panopolis. The former poem, in particular, addresses Hermes and says: κόσμος γὰρ κόσμου γεγαῶς [κόσμος συ κρατύνεις (“you have been the order of the universe, and rule it”).⁶⁶⁰ A different reading of the passage was provided by Livrea, who interpreted the adjective τετράζυξ as a reference to the Tetrarchic government of the world.⁶⁶¹ The hypothesis is clearly influenced by the general interpretation of the scholar, who considers *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 and *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352 parts of the same composition.⁶⁶² Since the latter papyrus explicitly names Diocletian, Livrea tried to find traces of the Tetrarchic age in the former also. Unfortunately, the connection between τετράζυξ and Diocletian is quite difficult to sustain. No other passage of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 refers to the Tetrarchy; a reference to Diocletian and his colleagues would be off topic even in this specific case. The symbolism of the number four is rich enough to make an allusion to the imperial power unnecessary. *Au contraire*, given the cosmogonic subject of the poem, Gigli Piccardi’s mention of the four elements is highly plausible. The idea that Hermes starts his work by evolving into a sort of pantheistic deity is not impossible. Yet, there is another possibility. In order to present it, we should focus on the verb introducing the line, namely the participle φορέων. It can be interpreted in two different ways: on the one hand, as “bearing, wearing”; on the other hand, as “assuming, taking”.⁶⁶³ The difference between the two meanings is deeper than one would expect. If we accept the former option, we should consider the τετράζυξ μορφή a constant feature of Hermes. If, on the contrary, we supported the latter possibility, we should take the attribute as something new: the god would be represented while assuming a new form to accomplish his mission. This second interpretation is confirmed by the poetic use of Nonnus.⁶⁶⁴ If we follow it, we can link our passage to a series of Christian

⁶⁶⁰ Cf. Heitsch 1965, 59 (n. 8, v. 18). While translating the line, I could not maintain its linguistic game: it is based on the semantic ambivalence of the substantive κόσμος, both «order, disposition» and «universe, world». For what concerns the passage of Zosimus, cf. *De Org.* 64–67.

⁶⁶¹ Cf. 2002, 20.

⁶⁶² See the introduction.

⁶⁶³ Cf. *LSJ*, 1950–1951.

⁶⁶⁴ Cf. *D.* XIV 159.

texts dealing with the incarnation of Christ: when evoking how Jesus assumed human nature, they use the same words as our poem. Some examples can be listed. The first and most important is Paul's *Letter to the Philippians*: while introducing the theological concept of Christ's κένωσις ("depletion"), the apostle remarks that the Son of God ἐαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν μορφὴν δούλου λαβών, "emptied himself taking the form of the servant".⁶⁶⁵ In his *Antirrheticus*, Gregory of Nissa presents Christ τὴν τῶν ἀνθρώπων [...] φορέσαντα μορφὴν, "assuming the form of men",⁶⁶⁶ and repeats the image a few sentences later.⁶⁶⁷ John Chrysostom highlights that the Messiah δούλου μορφὴν ἐφόρεσεν, "assumed the form of the slave".⁶⁶⁸ By quoting these passages, I do not want to say that the author of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 was inspired by them (or by the Christian doctrine lying behind them). I just suggest using them to understand what he has described. Like Christ, Hermes must descend to the physical world, in order to pacify the fighting elements. As the following lines demonstrate, he need to move from the heavenly regions (= the regions of ether) to the material ones (= to the reign of the four elements).⁶⁶⁹ For this reason, he – the Νοῦς of Zeus, the autonomous spark of his divine power – must pass from a celestial form to a terrestrial one. The reference to the τετράζυξ μορφή can be interpreted in this way: Hermes assumes an earthly nature; since this nature is made of the four elements of the physical world, the poet defines it as "fourfold". This hypothetical change of form could also explain the following line, where Hermes closes his eyes (see below).

v. 10. ὀφθαλμοῦ[ς κάμ]μυσε κ[εδα]ιομένης ὑπὲρ αἴγλης: the reading of the line is the result of two integrations. The former involves the verb following ὀφθαλμοῦ[ς], the latter the participle preceding ὑπὲρ. For the former problem, Reitzenstein wrote that "die Buchstabenreste

⁶⁶⁵ *Philippians* 2:7.

⁶⁶⁶ III 1, 163, 15.

⁶⁶⁷ Cf. *Antir.* III 1 164, 14; 18.

⁶⁶⁸ L 821, 35. A slightly different form in L 802, 7 (σὺ τὴν τοῦ δούλου μορφὴν φορεῖς, «you take the form of the servant»). Further examples are provided by Athanasius (*Quaest. Al.* 788, 25), Cyril of Alexandria (*Comm. Ioan.* I 141, 17; III 122, 19; etc.), Hesychius (*Hom.* 1, 6, 9; 16, 17, 14; etc.), and many others.

⁶⁶⁹ Cf. **F1**, vv. 11–12.

weisen auf κατ]άμυσε”, adding that a reading κάμ]μυσε (suggested by Kaibel) was possible as well.⁶⁷⁰ The two verbs have the same meaning, i.e. “to close”: καταμύω is the more common version, whereas καμμύω is a later form.⁶⁷¹ The two alternatives have divided the editors: Jacoby,⁶⁷² Page,⁶⁷³ Heitsch,⁶⁷⁴ and Gigli Piccardi⁶⁷⁵ lined up in support of the reading ὀφθαλμοῦ[ς κάμ]μυσε; Livrea,⁶⁷⁶ and Gambetti⁶⁷⁷ the other. The condition of the papyrus does not allow us to determine which hypothesis is correct: the split has deleted the first part of the word, and the following letters are quite confused. It must be noted, though, that choosing one alternative is not necessary to understand the sense of the passage: the two verbs have the same meaning. *Rebus sic stantibus*, I opted for the reading of Kaibel for two reasons: a) it is well attested in the time of our poem (between the fourth and the fifth centuries AD);⁶⁷⁸ b) it is supported by the majority of the editors. For the second lacuna, the first attempt at integration was made by Reitzenstein, who suggested two different possibilities: σκ[εδαζ]ομένης on the one hand,⁶⁷⁹ and κεδαζομένης on the other. They have the same meaning (“to scatter”). The second form was accepted by Jacoby.⁶⁸⁰ His example was followed by Page,⁶⁸¹ Heitsch⁶⁸² and Gigli Piccardi (even though she specified in the commentary that the form is scarcely used by imperial and Byzantine authors).⁶⁸³ Two other possibilities were proposed by Livrea: his critical text reads κ[εδα]ιομένης (“breaking up”); the apparatus reports μ[επι]ζομένης (“being dispersed”) as an alternative

⁶⁷⁰ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*

⁶⁷¹ Cf. *LSJ*, 901.

⁶⁷² Cf. *FGrHist* 637, F1.

⁶⁷³ Cf. 1941, *loc. cit.*

⁶⁷⁴ Cf. 1965, 82.

⁶⁷⁵ Cf. 1990, 69.

⁶⁷⁶ Cf. 2002, 22.

⁶⁷⁷ Cf. *BNJ* 637, F1.

⁶⁷⁸ E.g. Cyr. Alex. *Comm. Is.* 70, 185, 17; *Exp. Ps.* 69, 897, 34; etc.

⁶⁷⁹ The form reported by Reitzenstein 1901, 54 (σκ[εδαζ]ομένης) must be the result of a typo.

⁶⁸⁰ Cf. *FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*

⁶⁸¹ Cf. 1941, *loc. cit.*

⁶⁸² Cf. 1965, *loc. cit.*: West 1963, 171 expressed some doubts about the choice.

⁶⁸³ Cf. 1990, 103.

integration.⁶⁸⁴ The former solution was accepted by Gambetti.⁶⁸⁵ Since the letter preceding the lacuna is a kappa, the second hypothesis of Livrea can be put aside. For the other possibilities (σκεδαζομένης, κεδάζομένης, κεδαιομένης), determining the correct one is difficult. I opted for Livrea's solution because of its literary attestations: whereas the verb κεδαίω belongs to the vocabulary of epic, the two alternatives κεδάζω and σκεδάζω are only used by Byzantine sources.⁶⁸⁶ In spite of the textual difficulties, the sense of the passage is clear: Hermes closes his eyes because of the diffused light. What is not clear is the reason for the gesture. As Gigli Piccardi remarked, the absence of the final lines of the section makes its comprehension particularly hard.⁶⁸⁷ Reitzenstein explained the scene through a series of Egyptian precedents (e.g. what Philo of Byblos wrote about Thot),⁶⁸⁸ but his parallels were confuted by Keydell.⁶⁸⁹ Gigli Piccardi noted that the ritual ἀβλεψία had a huge importance in Hermetic and Gnostic initiations: being blind to the physical world was necessary to approach the spiritual reality. From this perspective, Hermes would close his eyes to complete his assimilation to the pantheistic deity (see above).⁶⁹⁰ Along with this interpretation, there is another possibility. As already mentioned, one could interpret the τετράζυξ μορφή of line 9 as a reference to the new form acquired by Hermes while moving to the earth: this new form

⁶⁸⁴ Cf. 2002, 22, 29. The scholar considered this verse an antithesis to **n. 3, F6, v. 22**: while the latter verse describes the dark society preceding the adventus of Diocletian, the former should present the light of the redeemed world. Such a reference aims to confirm Livrea's view of the two papyri, but is scarcely plausible. See the introduction for a general discussion of Livrea's interpretation.

⁶⁸⁵ Cf. *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*

⁶⁸⁶ The verb κεδαίω is attested in the poems of Aratus (I 140, 159), Apollonius (II 626) and Nicander (*Ther.* 425; *Alex.* 545). κεδάζω appears in the writings of Eustathius of Thessalonica (*Comm. Il.* I 216, 14; 372, 34; II 29, 18; 30, 1) and in other lexicographical texts (e.g. [Zon.] κ 1193; *Etym. Magn.* 498, 55; *Sud.* κ 1224; etc.). σκεδάζω in Byzantine sources such as George Choeroboscus (*Ep. Psal.* 167, 17), Eustratius (*Or.* I 54, 9), and Nicetas of Maronea (*Or. Proc. Spir.* IV 71, 12).

⁶⁸⁷ Cf. 1990, 104–105.

⁶⁸⁸ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.* The writing of Philo are quoted in Eus. *Praep. Ev.* I 10, 49. The same passage is quoted by Gigli Piccardi 1990, 104.

⁶⁸⁹ Cf. 1936, 465, n. 4.

⁶⁹⁰ Cf. 1990, 103–104.

would be defined “fourfold” because of its connection with the four earthly elements (see above). Going a bit further, one could take Hermes’ gesture as a consequence of this change of nature. When he was a pure Νόος, he could face the heavenly light.⁶⁹¹ Once he acquired an earthly μορφή, he cannot resist the celestial splendor anymore and must close his eyes.⁶⁹²

v. 11. [αἰθέρος εἶπέ τε μῦθον: most of the line has been lost. The conclusion is the only readable sequence. The genitive αἰθέρος (“of the ether”) was proposed by Schwartz to integrate the isolated letters preceding it.⁶⁹³ Since the heavenly material is mentioned in the following line (see below), the scholar’s proposal looks convincing. In his critical edition, Livrea used it to reconstruct the antecedent words. He adapted the expression δι’ αἰθέρος ἀτρυγέτοιο (“through the barren ether”)⁶⁹⁴ to the line and put a verb of movement (σεύω, “to hurry away to”) before it: as a result, he obtained the verse ἔσσυτο δ’ ἀτρυγέτοιο δι’ [αἰθέρος] εἶπέ τε μῦθον (“he hurried through the barren ether and spoke”).⁶⁹⁵ The reconstruction was accepted by Gambetti.⁶⁹⁶ Some remarks are necessary. Reconstructing huge portions of lost lines is generally risky. The sense of the reconstructed text can be plausible, but nothing guarantees it is correct. The hypothesis of Livrea is a good example of that. The integrated line fits perfectly the context: Hermes hurries to the earth crossing the heavenly ether. But what about the choice of words and their disposition? From this viewpoint, the structure works less comfortably. As I said, the expression δι’ αἰθέρος ἀτρυγέτοιο is well attested in Greek poetry. Unfortunately, we cannot say the same for the inverted sequence ἀτρυγέτοιο δι’ αἰθέρος: as the *TLG* reveals, it is attested just once, in Maximus Planudes’ translation of

⁶⁹¹ The connection between Νόος and ether is stated already in Euripides: cf. *Hel.* 1014–1015.

⁶⁹² For a semantic analysis of the substantive αἴγλη, see the commentary to **F1**, vv. 22–23.

⁶⁹³ Cf. West 1963, 171.

⁶⁹⁴ Cf. Hom. *Il.* XVII 425; *Hymn Cer.* 67, 457; Hes. *Theog.* 696; etc.

⁶⁹⁵ Cf. 2002, 22.

⁶⁹⁶ Cf. *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*

Boethius' *De consolazione Philosophiae*.⁶⁹⁷ Concerning the imperfect ἔσσυτο, there is no element – except for the general meaning – to confirm its presence here. For these reasons, I prefer to maintain the line as it emerges from the analysis of Schwartz:]αἰθέρος εἶπέ τε μῦθον, “[...] ether and spoke”. Hermes has arrived to the physical world and is ready to speak.

v. 12.]...[...][...][...]. . . . ι πρόμος αἰθέρος . [.....] αὐτός: just a few words of the line are readable. Given the closure of the preceding verse, we can suppose that the speech of Hermes started here. The god mentions his father Zeus, defining him as “the lord of ether” (πρόμος αἰθέρος). The reference to the heavenly element supports Schwartz’s integration of line 11 and, more generally, the interpretation of lines 9–11 (see above).⁶⁹⁸ The object of Hermes’ speaking is revealed by the infinitive proposition of the following verse: the god announces the will of his father. As the subject of lines 14–17 shows, he addresses the elements he is going to regulate (see below). For this reason, Reitzenstein hypothesized the imperative κέκλυτε (“hear”) at the beginning of the verse.⁶⁹⁹ The verb governing the infinitive of line 13 is lost: either it was at the end of the same unit (Reitzenstein,⁷⁰⁰ Jacoby,⁷⁰¹ Page,⁷⁰² and Heitsch),⁷⁰³ or in the preceding one (Gigli Piccardi,⁷⁰⁴ Livrea,⁷⁰⁵ and Gambetti).⁷⁰⁶ What remains of the two lines does not allow us to solve the problem.

⁶⁹⁷ Cf. V 77, 1.

⁶⁹⁸ Nonnus attributes the same title to Heracles in two passages of the *Dionysiaca*: cf. XX 365; XL 574. See also Gigli Piccardi 1990, 105–106.

⁶⁹⁹ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*

⁷⁰⁰ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*

⁷⁰¹ Cf. *FGrHist* 637, F1.

⁷⁰² Cf. 1941, *loc. cit.*

⁷⁰³ Cf. 1965, 83.

⁷⁰⁴ Cf. 1990, 106: «sarei propensa a collocare in questo verso, prima di αὐτός, un verbo che indichi il volere di Zeus, piuttosto che in fondo al verso seguente [...]; in tal modo infatti si spiega meglio la ripresa enfatica di αὐτός in fine di verso». The scholar hypothesizes how the verse should sound like: ἀγλαὸν ἔργον ἐμοὶ ἰ πρόμος αἰθέρος [ᾠπασεν] αὐτός («the king of heaven gave me a noble mission»).

⁷⁰⁵ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.*

⁷⁰⁶ Cf. *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*

v. 13. λη]γήμεναι προτέρης ἔριδος στοιχεῖ[α: as already stated, the infinitive proposition of line 13 reveals the contents of Hermes' speech. The "Lord of Ether" desires that "the elements stop their past conflict". The expression is of Homeric origin.⁷⁰⁷ The line presents two elements of interest: the use of στοιχεῖ[α ("elements, components") on the one hand, and the reference to a "past conflict" (προτέρης ἔριδος) on the other. The substantive στοιχεῖον has an immense philosophical background. Plato was the first to use it to indicate the four natural elements:⁷⁰⁸ before him, the father of the theory Empedocles had opted for the form ῥιζώματα ("roots").⁷⁰⁹ The use of the noun is not the only contact point between the *Timaeus* and our poem. As Gigli Piccardi noted, the shaping of the world in the platonic dialogue is quite similar to the representation of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481. A divine figure approaches the primeval matter and shapes it: before doing so, he addresses it with some imperatives.⁷¹⁰ It is highly plausible that our poet knew Plato's dialogue: the works of the philosopher were part of rhetorical training, at least for their stylistic value.⁷¹¹ Even the idea of a "past conflict" has a philosophical origin. According to Empedocles, the four natural elements are cyclically attracted and separated by two powers, Love (φιλότης) and Strife (νεῖκος). If the former entity prevails, the four roots blend together and create something; if the latter overcomes, they break off and throw the universe into chaos.⁷¹² The testimony of Menander the Rhetor demonstrates that Empedocles was still read by late antique poets and rhetoricians: his idea of cosmic Love creating the world was one of the literary *topoi* they could use.⁷¹³ We could suppose that the author of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 knew the philosopher. From this perspective, we could interpret our passage as the end of Strife's dominance. As a confirmation, one could note that the first word of line

⁷⁰⁷ Cf. *Il.* I 210, 319; IX 257; XXI 359.

⁷⁰⁸ Cf. *Tim.* 48 b-c.

⁷⁰⁹ Cf. B6 D.-K.

⁷¹⁰ Cf. *Tim.* 41 a-d; see Gigli Piccardi 1990, 105-107. The scholar evoked also the literary precedent of the *Bible*: cf. *Genesis* 1:3-30.

⁷¹¹ Cf. Miguélez Caverio 2008, 230-231.

⁷¹² Cf. B26, 35 D.-K.

⁷¹³ Cf. *Men. Rhet.* II 401, 2-4.

14 is the dative ἀρ]μονίη (“harmony”), while the central concepts of line 16 are “friendship” (φιλότης) and “desire” (ἔμερος; see below). Hermes invites the elements to abandon their reciprocal νεῖκος (= the προτέρα ἔρις of line 13) and to return together. It must be said, though, that the idea of a passage from the primeval chaos to the structured universe has always belonged to Greek culture: centuries before Empedocles, Hesiod had celebrated the transition in his *Theogony*.⁷¹⁴ As I already noted, the verb governing the infinitive of line 13 is lost. According to Reitzenstein, Jacoby, Page, and Heitsch, it was originally placed at the end of the line: for this reason, they concluded the verse with the indicative κελεύει (“he exhorts / orders / requests”).⁷¹⁵ Gigli Piccardi did not agree and left the lacuna.⁷¹⁶ Livrea integrated it with the genitive γενέθλης (“of family”) and his suggestion was followed by Gambetti. This intervention goes along with another integration of the scholar, that of line 15 (see below).⁷¹⁷

vv. 14. – 15. ἀρ]μονίη πείθεσθε διακρίνεσθέ δ[ὲ νεῖκος. / λ]ωϊτέρη δέ τις ὑμῖν συνήλυσι[ς: Hermes’ invitations are all expressed in the second person plural, revealing that the god directly addresses the four στοιχεῖα. The reference to harmony opening line 14 is another (implicit) quote of Empedocles’ theories (see above). In this light, Keydell’s integration δ[ὲ νεῖκος (“the strife”) is highly plausible: it echoes Empedocles’ view of the two cosmic powers.⁷¹⁸ The mention of φιλότης in the following line supports it (see below). Less convincing is the integration of Reitzenstein, who edited the line as follows: δα]ιμονίη πείθεσθε διακρίνεσθέ (τ’) [έφετμη (“yield to the divine command and

⁷¹⁴ Cf. Hes. *Theog.* 116.

⁷¹⁵ Treu (1973, 235) proposed the reading κελεύω («I command»), taking Hermes as the subject of the sentence. Given the presence of the nominative πρόμος αἰθέρος in the preceding line and its clear reference to Zeus, the hypothesis is not convincing.

⁷¹⁶ Cf. 1990, 69.

⁷¹⁷ Livrea inserted the genitive γενέθλης also at the end of a line of *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352 (cf. **n. 3, F6**, v. 16): a way to confirm the original unity of the two fragments?

⁷¹⁸ Cf. 1936, 465, n. 5. The result of Keydell’s integration is a chiasmic verse: such a structure was probably necessary to make Hermes’ order «più energico ed efficace» (Gigli Piccardi 1990, 55).

decide”).⁷¹⁹ The reading presents two problems at least: first, it isolates the verb διακρίνω; second, it takes the delta of the papyrus as a tau.⁷²⁰ Both difficulties are avoided by Keydell’s proposal: one, it does not stumble upon the delta; second, it proposes a binomial διακρίνομαι + νεῖκος, which is already attested in Hesiod.⁷²¹ As Gigli Piccardi remarked, the verb διακρίνω is commonly used by cosmogonic texts to indicate the separation of elements.⁷²² The scholar linked the συνήλυσις of line 15 to the same philosophical vocabulary.⁷²³ The integration ἔσσετ’ ἔπειτα (“will be in a later moment”) was proposed by Reitzenstein,⁷²⁴ and accepted by the majority of scholars.⁷²⁵ A different hypothesis was suggested by Livrea, whose text reads λ]ωῖτέρη δέ τις ὕμμι συνήλυσις ἔσσεθ’ ὁμαίοις (“a solution will be better for you as siblings”).⁷²⁶ The proposal goes along with Livrea’s integration of line 13 (see above): they both highlight the family bond of the four elements. Both integrations are plausible: there is no safe factor to prefer one to the other.

vv. 16. – 17. τεύξω γὰρ φιλότητα καὶ ἥμερον, [οἷ συνάγωσιν / ὕμέας ἀλλήλοισιν ἀρειοτέρη ἐπ’]ι μοίρη: the verb τεύχω (“to produce by work”) commonly refers to artisanal activities; its use in this context confirms that the creation is characterized by our poem as an artisanal work (cf. **F1**, v. 3).⁷²⁷ At the center of line 16, the poet places two important substantives, namely “love” (φιλότης) and “desire” (ἥμερος). As already said, they evoke the cosmogony of Empedocles, centered on

⁷¹⁹ Cf. 1901, 54: as an alternative to δαι]μονίη (suggested to him by Keil), the editor proposes the reading αἰωνίη («divine»). The reading has been partially accepted by Jacoby: ἀρ]μονίη πείθεσθε διακρίνεσθέ (τ’) [έφετμή (cf. *FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁷²⁰ Reitzenstein himself admitted it: «für τ’ scheint δ’ geschrieben» (1901, *loc. cit.*).

⁷²¹ Cf. *Op.* 35.

⁷²² Cf. 1990, 109.

⁷²³ Cf. 1990, 110.

⁷²⁴ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*

⁷²⁵ Cf. *FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*; Page 1941, *loc. cit.*; Heitsch 1965, 83; Gigli Piccardi 1990, 69.

⁷²⁶ Cf. 2002, 22. The reading is accepted also by Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁷²⁷ A similar use of the verb can be found in Pindar (*F* 141 Maehler) and Eudemus (*De S. Cyp.* II 211): cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 111.

the fighting between Love and Strife (see above). The conclusion of line 16 is lost. Reitzenstein integrated it as follows: [ἀμφὶς ἐοῦσιν, “to you / those being apart”.⁷²⁸ The reading was accepted by Jacoby⁷²⁹ and Page,⁷³⁰ but not by Heitsch, who left the lacuna at the end of the verse.⁷³¹ Gigli Piccardi proposed the integration [οἷ συνάγωσιν (“which bring”),⁷³² and was followed by Livrea⁷³³ and Gambetti.⁷³⁴ I decided to accept it for two reasons: first, it provides the following verse with a governing verb (Reitzenstein’s text does not); second, the verb it uses is frequently attested in philosophical texts dealing with the divine demiurge.⁷³⁵ For line 17, Reitzenstein proposed the integration ἀρειοτέρῃ ἐπ[ὶ μοίρῃ (“to a better fate”).⁷³⁶ He was followed by all scholars⁷³⁷ except Gigli Piccardi, who suggested a more specific ἀρειοτέρῃ ἐπ[ὶ τάξει (“to a better order”).⁷³⁸ To sustain her hypothesis, the scholar quoted two philosophical passages noting that the demiurge led the physical world to a better τάξις.⁷³⁹ Both interpretations are plausible: for this reason, while inserting the former in the text of my edition, I mentioned the other in the apparatus.

v. 18. ὥς εἰπὼν χρυσέῃ ῥάβδῳ θίγεν [: having concluded his speech, Hermes takes action and touches the fighting elements with his golden rod. The lost final section of the line almost certainly named the matter

⁷²⁸ Cf. 1901, 54.

⁷²⁹ Cf. *FGrHist* 637, F1.

⁷³⁰ Cf. 1941, *loc. cit.*

⁷³¹ Cf. 1965, 83.

⁷³² Cf. 1990, 69.

⁷³³ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.*

⁷³⁴ Cf. *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*

⁷³⁵ See Gigli Piccardi 1990, 112: «l’uso del verbo συνάγειν a proposito degli effetti della φιλία, dell’incontro, della riconciliazione degli elementi, o comunque del potere connettivo della divinità in relazione al tutto, è comune da Empedocle in poi e in modo particolare nel *Corpus Hermeticum*». Cf. Plat. *Symp.* 191d; Arist. *Met.* 1000b 11–12; Phil. *Conf. Ling.* 136; *O.C.* F 107, 11 des Places; Greg. Nys. I 464 A; Max. Tyr. *Diss.* VII 3; *CH* XI 8, 8.

⁷³⁶ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*

⁷³⁷ Cf. Jacoby (*FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*); Page (1941, *loc. cit.*); Heitsch (1965, *loc. cit.*); Livrea (2002, *loc. cit.*); Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁷³⁸ Cf. 1990, 69.

⁷³⁹ See Plat. *Tim.* 30a; Alb. 12 (cf. 1990, 112–113).

touched by the god. Reitzenstein,⁷⁴⁰ Jacoby,⁷⁴¹ and Page⁷⁴² left the lacuna as it is, and so did Heitsch.⁷⁴³ West proposed the integration [ἄντυγα κόσμου (“the edge of the universe”).⁷⁴⁴ It is not impossible: yet, it anticipates the curvature of the cosmos, which takes place only in the following lines (cf. **F1**, vv. 26–27).⁷⁴⁵ Gigli Piccardi’s edition has [ἄκριτον ὄγκον, “undistinguishable mass”.⁷⁴⁶ The scholar based her hypothesis on three main considerations:⁷⁴⁷ a) before Hermes separates them (= διάκρισις), the four elements must be an undifferentiated group; b) the substantive ὄγκος is frequently used in texts dealing with the physical world;⁷⁴⁸ c) the poetic use of the word is demonstrated by the frequent attestations in Nonnus’ poems.⁷⁴⁹ Another integration was proposed by Livrea: [ἄστατον ὕλην, “agitated matter”.⁷⁵⁰ The reference to the moving matter connects the line to the successive one, which highlights the sudden stillness following the touch of Hermes (see below). In my view, reconstructing the lost section of the line is not possible anymore. There is no element to prefer either the hypothesis of Gigli Piccardi and Livrea. Both integrations fit the context of the narrative. Both respect the metric of the line and do not violate the vocabulary standards of the age. Another point must be added: nothing impedes taking other solutions into account. As an example, I could suggest the compromise integration [ἄκριτον ὕλην, “undistinguishable matter”. *Rebus sic stantibus*, I followed the examples of Reitzenstein, Jacoby, and Heitsch, and did not integrate the lacuna.

⁷⁴⁰ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*

⁷⁴¹ Cf. *FGrHist* 637, F1.

⁷⁴² Cf. 1941, *loc. cit.*

⁷⁴³ Cf. 1965, 83.

⁷⁴⁴ Cf. 1963, *loc. cit.*

⁷⁴⁵ Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 114.

⁷⁴⁶ Cf. 1990, 69.

⁷⁴⁷ Cf. 1990, 113–114

⁷⁴⁸ It appears in the texts of Empedocles (20 B20, 4; 100, 23 D.–K.), Parmenides (B8, 43 D.–K.), and Aristotle (*Phys.* 203b 28).

⁷⁴⁹ Cf. *D.* I 9; IV 10; V 193; VIII 7, 31, 408; XII 200, 269, 301, 313; etc. See also *Par.* VI 47; XX 116; XXI 68.

⁷⁵⁰ Cf. 2002, 22. The integration was accepted by Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

v. 19. εὐκήλῳ δὲ τάχιστα κατείχετ[ο πάντα γαλήνῃ: the adjective εὐκήλῳ (“still”) at the beginning of the line requires a substantive to refer to. The noun must have been lost with the last section of the verse. Along with it, the missing text must have also included the subject of the verb κατείχετ[ο (“was covered with / taken by”). Reitzenstein proposed an integration solving both problems: εὐκήλῳ δὲ τάχιστα κατείχετ[ο πάντα γαλήνῃ, “and quickly everything was covered with a calm stillness”.⁷⁵¹ It was inspired by a line of Apollonius of Rhodes⁷⁵² and was accepted by all the scholars.⁷⁵³ The substantive γαλήνῃ is normally used to indicate the calm of the sea.⁷⁵⁴ Livrea considered it a reference to Diocletian’s peace: in order to support the idea (which must in turn support his general interpretation of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481: see the introduction), the scholar linked line 19 to **n. 3, F6**, vv. 27–31. The connection is disputable.

v. 20. παυσάμενα στοιχεῖα πολυφ[λοίσβου πολέμοιο: in the preceding line, the poet has highlighted the calm following Hermes’ touch. In this verse, he enriches the scene, focusing on the four elements. A huge portion of text is missing, but the participle at the beginning of the line reveals its subject: as a result of Hermes action, the στοιχεῖα stop doing something. Four different integrations have been proposed to complete the passage. The first was suggested by Reitzenstein: παυσάμενα στοιχεῖα πολυσ[χιδέων καταμιγμῶν, “since the elements had stopped their complex mixing”.⁷⁵⁵ The second was hypothesized by Wifstrand and noted by Heitsch: παυσάμενα στοιχεῖα πολυσ[τόνου αὐτίκα νείκους, “since the elements had immediately stopped the noisy battle”.⁷⁵⁶ West provided a third reading: παυσάμενα στοιχεῖα πολυσ[τόνου αὐτίκα νείκους, “since the elements had stopped the

⁷⁵¹ Cf. 1901, 54.

⁷⁵² Cf. IV 1249.

⁷⁵³ Cf. Jacoby (*FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*), Page (1941, *loc. cit.*); Heitsch (1965, *loc. cit.*), Gigli Piccardi (1990, 69), Livrea (2002, *loc. cit.*), and Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁷⁵⁴ Cf. *LSJ*, 336.

⁷⁵⁵ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.* The reading was accepted also by Jacoby (*FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁷⁵⁶ Cf. Heitsch 1965, *loc. cit.*

widespread war”.⁷⁵⁷ The fourth and final proposal is of Gigli Piccardi, who interpreted the last letter of the line in a different way: παυσάμενα στοιχεῖα πολυφ[λοίσβου πολέμοιο, “since the elements had stopped the loud-roaring war”.⁷⁵⁸ Among all the proposals, that of Gigli Piccardi is the only already attested.⁷⁵⁹ Furthermore, it involves an adjective (πολύφλοισβος) commonly used to define the sea:⁷⁶⁰ this aspect links the integration to the γαλήνη of the preceding line (see above). For these two aspects, I have included it in my text. According to Livrea, lines 19–20 should be linked to the verses of *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352 describing the messianic arrival of Diocletian:⁷⁶¹ the worldly peace guaranteed by the emperor would be a reduced image of the cosmic peace provided by Hermes.⁷⁶² The scholar took this parallelism as further proof of his interpretation of the two papyri.⁷⁶³ Even if the idea of a cosmic peace was strongly supported by Tetrarchic propaganda, I would not consider it an argument sufficient to match the two sections. The only element they share is the role of Zeus, attributing to a figure (Hermes in the papyrus of Strasbourg, Diocletian in that of Oxyrhynchus) the control of the world. For the rest, their development is quite different: the description of our poem is more compact than that of *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352, and lacks the eschatological and celebratory afflatus of Diocletian’s presentation.⁷⁶⁴

v. 21. ἔστε δ’ εὐθὺς ἕκαστον ὀφειλ[ομένῳ ἐνὶ χῶρῳ: as Gigli Piccardi noted, the position of ἔστε (“stood”) at the beginning of the line bestows a particular strength on the new order obtained by Hermes. As soon as the god touches them, the elements find the right place and stand. The integration ὀφειλ[ομένῳ ἐνὶ χῶρῳ (“in the necessary place”)

⁷⁵⁷ Cf. 1973, *loc. cit.*

⁷⁵⁸ Cf. 1990, 69. The reading was accepted also by Livrea (2002, *loc. cit.*) and Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁷⁵⁹ Cf. Tryph. 559–560: οἷα θύελλα, / κύμασι παφλάζουσα πολυφλοίσβου πολέμοιο, «like a hurricane, which boils with the waves of loud-roaring war».

⁷⁶⁰ Cf. *LSJ*, 1445.

⁷⁶¹ Cf. **n. 3, F6**, vv. 27–31.

⁷⁶² Cf. 2002, 21.

⁷⁶³ See the introduction.

⁷⁶⁴ See the commentary to **n. 3, F6**, vv. 27–31.

was proposed by Reitzenstein⁷⁶⁵ and accepted by the successive scholars.⁷⁶⁶ It is confirmed by many cosmogonic texts.⁷⁶⁷

vv. 22. – 23. μαρμαρυγή δ ... [.] ... / δηναίης [: the scanty text at our disposal makes the comprehension of lines 22–23 quite difficult. The only readable word of the former verse is the substantive μαρμαρυγή (“flash”). Reitzenstein linked it to the αἴγλης of line 10 (see above),⁷⁶⁸ and his connection was supported by Keydell.⁷⁶⁹ The hypothesis is disputable. From a semantic point of view, the two nouns refer to different things: αἴγλη indicates the light of the sun and the moon, that is, a continuous gleam;⁷⁷⁰ μαρμαρυγή identifies the sudden flash of a light instead.⁷⁷¹ In all probability, the phenomena these two words refer to, are of different natures. As a confirmation of that, one could point out that the scenarios of the two lines are not the same: in the former case, Hermes is with his father in heaven; in the latter, he is in the physical world. Once we have stated that the two substantives do not refer to the same thing, how can we interpret the accusative of line 22? A plausible explanation was provided by Gigli Piccardi.⁷⁷² The scholar cited a passage of the *Corpus Hermeticum*. When describing the hierarchy of the seven skies, the eleventh treatise of the collection says: φωτὸς δὲ πάντα πλήρη, πῦρ δὲ οὐδαμοῦ· ἡ γὰρ φιλία καὶ ἡ σύγκρασις τῶν ἐναντίων καὶ τῶν ἀνομοίων φῶς γέγονε (“all is full of light, even if there is no fire: indeed, the friendship and the commixture of the opposites and the

⁷⁶⁵ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*

⁷⁶⁶ Cf. Jacoby (*FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*), Page (1941, *loc. cit.*); Heitsch (1965, *loc. cit.*), Gigli Piccardi (1990, *loc. cit.*), Livrea (2002, *loc. cit.*), and Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁷⁶⁷ For a complete list, see Gigli Piccardi 1990, 117.

⁷⁶⁸ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*

⁷⁶⁹ Cf. 1936, 465, n. 4.

⁷⁷⁰ Cf. *LSJ*, 35.

⁷⁷¹ Hence its use to indicate quick motions: cf. *LSJ*, 1081. Gigli Piccardi (1990, 119) noted that late antique epics use the substantive also to indicate the light of celestial bodies, such as the moon (cf. *D.* VII 303; IX 4; XXXIV 42; etc.) or the stars (cf. *D.* VI 333; XXXVIII 249). In this case, I would exclude this kind of reference, since neither the sun, nor the other celestial bodies have been created yet.

⁷⁷² Cf. 1990, 117–119.

diverse has become light”).⁷⁷³ Light originates in the peaceful relationship of the elements: the flash of line 22 could be the result of the same process. Gigli Piccardi interpreted the adjective of line 23 – δηναίος (“long-lived”) – as an attribute of this relation: in her commentary, she hypothesized the integration δηναίης [φιλότητος, “of long-living / eternal friendship”].⁷⁷⁴ The interpretation was accepted by Livrea, who developed the text of the two lines: μαρμαρυγὴν δ’ ἤστ[ρ]απτ[ε] / δηναίης [φιλότητος ὑποζεύσσα λέπαδνον (“produced a flash [...] / having yoked the leather strap of a long friendship”).⁷⁷⁵ Such an integration is questionable for two reasons at least: for the extension of the additions; and because of the absence of other attestations. The same can be said for Reitzenstein’s reading of line 23 (δηναίης [δὲ διχοστασίης λάθεται ἀρθμηθέντα, “but forgot the long dissension, being unified”).⁷⁷⁶ In both cases, the sense of the line fits the narrative context (= what we have of it), but cannot be confirmed. Given all these difficulties, I decided to transcribe the lines as they are in the papyrus, without adding anything.

vv. 24. – 25. αὐτὰρ ὁ παγγενέτα[ο θεοῦ * υἱός / πρῶτα μὲν αἰγλήεν[τα:** the reading of the papyrus is πανγενέτα[, i.e. the phonetic transcription of παγγενέτα[(hence the correction of Reitzenstein).⁷⁷⁷ The sequence corresponds to the epic genitive of the adjective παγγενέτης, “father of all”. As its attestations in Greek literature demonstrate, the attribute normally refers to Zeus.⁷⁷⁸ Reitzenstein’s

⁷⁷³ CH XI 7, 3–5.

⁷⁷⁴ Cf. 1990, 119.

⁷⁷⁵ Cf. 2002, 22. The same text was reported by Gambetti, who referred ἤστ[ρ]απτ[ε] to Hermes. She translated the verse as follows: «and he produced a flash of lighting» (BNJ 637, *loc. cit.*). It must be noted, though, that one could link the verb of line 22 to the ἕκαστον of the preceding verse (= every element stood and produced a flash of light).

⁷⁷⁶ Reitzenstein’s proposal was accepted by Jacoby (cf. FGrHist 637, *loc. cit.*), Page (1941, *loc. cit.*), and Heitsch (1965, *loc. cit.*).

⁷⁷⁷ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*

⁷⁷⁸ Cf. *Hymn.* 20, 5; 73, 2; *Orac. Syb.* 3, 550; *Procl. Hym.* 1, 34; *AP* I 19, 11. In a Christian context, the adjective is referred to God: cf. Nonn. *Par.* I 106; V 171; XII 154.

integration (παγγενέτα[ο θεοῦ, “of the divine father of all”]⁷⁷⁹ is confirmed by many passages of late antique epic.⁷⁸⁰ The determinative article ὁ requires a nominative. Since the protagonist of the section is Hermes, i.e. the son of the “divine father of all”, Heitsch inserted the substantive υἱός (“son”) at the end of the verse.⁷⁸¹ As Gigli Piccardi remarked, the addition is “resa necessaria per il senso”.⁷⁸² Livrea completed the hexameter placing the locution μάλα κύδιμος (“very glorious”) after θεοῦ.⁷⁸³ The adjective κύδιμος is a typical attribute of Hermes.⁷⁸⁴ It must be noted, though, that it is never attested along with the adverb μάλα. For this reason, I did not insert the integration into my edition. Line 25 opens the narrative on the real creation: Hermes has ordered the elements and is now ready to shape the universe. As Gigli Piccardi highlighted, the expression πρῶτα μὲν (“at first”) is typical of cosmogonic narrations: this kind of indication is usually used to organize a succession of events, arranging the different phases in the right order.⁷⁸⁵ After that, we find the adjective αἰγλήεις (“dazzling, radiant”): it shares its root with the αἰγλή of line 10 (see above). Like the substantive, it indicates the fixed splendor of sky, the light of the sun and that of other celestial bodies.⁷⁸⁶ Lines 26–27 describe the curvature of heaven (see below): it is highly probable – as Gigli Piccardi hypothesized – that the process originally started in the lost half of line 25.⁷⁸⁷ In this light, the accusative αἰγλήεν[τα could be an attribute of the celestial ether, as suggested by Reitzensten.⁷⁸⁸ Moving from this

⁷⁷⁹ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*

⁷⁸⁰ Cf. *Orac. Syb.* 3, 550; *Procl. Hym.* 1, 34; *Nonn. Par.* I 106; V 171; XII 154; *AP* I 19, 11.

⁷⁸¹ Cf. 1965, *loc. cit.*

⁷⁸² Cf. 1990, 120.

⁷⁸³ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.* The hypothesis was followed by Gambetti as well (cf. *BNJ* 637, F1).

⁷⁸⁴ Cf. *H. Merc.* 46, 84, 96, 130, 150, etc.; *Hes. Theog.* 938; etc.

⁷⁸⁵ See *PGM* 13, 165; *Cic. Div.* I 17. To these pagan texts, we should add the Biblical *Genesis* (1–2) and Gregory of Nazianzus’ *Carm.* 527: cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 120–121. The text of Gregory and its connections with our passage are analyzed at the end of the paragraph.

⁷⁸⁶ Homer attributes the adjective to the Olympus (e.g. *Il.* I 532; *Od.* XX 103; cf. *LSJ*, 35). For the semantic analysis of αἰγλή, see the commentary to lines 22–23.

⁷⁸⁷ Cf. 1990, 121.

⁷⁸⁸ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*

interpretation, Gigli Piccardi hypothesized the following restoration: *πρῶτα μὲν αἰγλήεν[τα καὶ αἴθοπα πυρσὸν ἐλίσσω* (“first of all, turning the dazzling and flashing fire”). The reconstruction is based both on the equation *ether = fire* and on the astronomic use of *ἐλίσσω*.⁷⁸⁹ A different hypothesis is that of Livrea: *πρῶτα μὲν αἰγλήεν[τα δι’ αἰθέρος οἶμον ὀδεύων* (“first of all, going on a splendid path through the ether”).⁷⁹⁰ It entails a second passage *δι’ αἰθέρος*, “through the ether”, after that of line 11 (see above). According to Wyss, verses 24–25 were a source of inspiration for Gregory of Nazianzus.⁷⁹¹ The scholar connected them to Gregory’s *Carm.* 527, 3–6: *ἀλλὰ σὺ, Χριστὲ μάκαρ, Πατρὸς μεγάλου φραδίῃσι / πειθόμενος τὰ ἕκαστα διέκρινας εὖ κατὰ κόσμον. / ἦτοι μὲν πρῶτιστα φάος γένεθ’, ὥς κεν ἅπαντα / ἔργα πέλοι χαρίεντα φάους πλέα* (“but you, blessed Christ, persuaded by the knowledge of the great Father, disposed everything in a good order. First was the light, so that everything came into existence full of beauty and light”). If we compare the two texts, we can find four similarities: a) the adversative conjunction at the beginning (*αὐτάρ* in our papyrus, *ἀλλά* in Gregory); b) the mention of the father (*παγγενέτα[ο θεοῦ – Πατρὸς μεγάλου*); c) the reference to the chronological succession (*πρῶτα – πρῶτιστα*); d) the important role played by light (*αἰγλήεν[τα – φάος γένεθ’ / φάους πλέα*). These elements are not enough to guarantee a direct connection between Gregory and the poet of the papyrus. As already said for lines 7–8 (see above), the literary choices of the former can be explained by taking his Christian background into account. In this case, we also have to consider the literary conventions of cosmogonic works. Let me go into detail. The presence of the adversative *ἀλλά* in Gregory’s text is due to the lines preceding it: they describe the primeval Chaos, noting that everything was in darkness.⁷⁹² *In spite of that* – Gregory writes – Christ followed the will of his father and put everything in order. The mention of the supreme god has different values in the two passages. In the papyrus, it functions to solemnize the role and the position of Hermes, solemnly defined “the son of the divine father of all”. In Gregory’s poem,

⁷⁸⁹ Cf. 1990, 121–122.

⁷⁹⁰ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.* ; see also Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁷⁹¹ Cf. 1949, *loc. cit.*

⁷⁹² Cf. *Carm.* 527, 1–2.

God is not named to enrich the attributes of his son, but because of his narrative function: his φραδὴ is responsible for Christ's initiative. Even Gregory's reference to the light is quite different from that of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481: the latter refers to an entity (= the sky), which already exists and is brilliant because of its composition; the former follows the Biblical narration and celebrates the creation *ex nihilo* of the Light itself. As it is possible to see, the two texts have less in common than one would expect. The only common aspect is the use of the neuters πρῶτα / πρῶτιστα, which can be easily explained as the result of literary norms: as already said, the chronological division is a typical feature of cosmogonic texts (see above).

vv. 26. – 27. ἀρρήτω στροφάλιγγι π[α]λινδι[νητον / οὐρανὸν ἐσφαίρωσε κατέστραφε: line 26 starts off with the dative ἀρρήτω στροφάλιγγι, “with an immense swirl”. The following letters have been integrated in different ways. Reitzenstein suggested the text: ἀρρήτω στροφάλιγγι π[α]λιν[δ]ι[νητον ἀνάγκην] (“with an immense swirl, the whirling necessity”).⁷⁹³ The reading is attested in other late antique compositions.⁷⁹⁴ It was accepted by Jacoby,⁷⁹⁵ Page,⁷⁹⁶ and Heitsch.⁷⁹⁷ A different possibility was proposed by Zieliński: ἀρρήτω στροφάλιγγι π[α]λιν[δ]ι[νητον ἔτευξεν, “with an immense swirl, produced a whirling (sky)”.⁷⁹⁸ Gigli Piccardi returned to Reitzenstein's proposal, but turned the accusative π[α]λιν[δ]ι[νητον ἀνάγκην into a genitive: ἀρρήτω στροφάλιγγι π[α]λινδι[νήτου ἀνάγκης] (“with the immense swirl of the whirling necessity”).⁷⁹⁹ Finally, a different reading was hypothesized by Livrea: ἀρρήτω στροφάλιγγι π[α]λιν[δ]ι[νητον ἐλίξας, “with the immense swirl, having turned the whirling (sky)”.⁸⁰⁰ The integration is also in Gambetti's edition.⁸⁰¹ Before analyzing the different hypotheses, a preliminary consideration is necessary: from a syntactic viewpoint, the

⁷⁹³ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*

⁷⁹⁴ Cf. Claud. *Ep.* 6, 2; Nonn. *D.* II 265; *AP* IX 505, 14.

⁷⁹⁵ Cf. *FGrHist* 637, F1.

⁷⁹⁶ Cf. 1941, 548.

⁷⁹⁷ Cf. 1965, *loc. cit.*

⁷⁹⁸ Cf. 1941, 119.

⁷⁹⁹ Cf. 1990, 71.

⁸⁰⁰ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.*

⁸⁰¹ Cf. *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*

line is not autonomous; it must be linked either to the preceding verse, or to the successive one. Unfortunately, given the lacking text of line 25, it is not possible to determine where the governing verb must be placed. This element makes any attempt at reconstruction a hypothesis which cannot be proved. That said, we can make some observations. Among the integrations proposed by scholars, that of Zieliński is the least plausible: the scholar inserted the governing verb at the end of the line, referring the adjective π[α]λιν[δ]ί[ν]ητον to the οὐρανὸν of the following verse. Since line 27 already includes two verbs (ἐσφαίρωσε and the incomplete κατεστραφ[ι]: see below), this editorial choice would implicate a sentence with three governing verbs and a single object: such a structure is not impossible, but is quite implausible. No other verse of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 has the same accumulation of verbs. The inelegant absence of any conjunction between ἔτευξεν and ἐσφαίρωσε (an enclitic τε, for instance)⁸⁰² makes the period even less reliable. Next, Reitzenstein's solution implies that the verb governing π[α]λιν[δ]ί[ν]ητον ἀνάγκην was originally in the preceding verse: it is not impossible, but the space is scarce. The lacuna of line 25 includes three feet and a syllable (πρῶτα μὲν αἰγλήεν[τα υ | _ υυ | _ υυ | _ υ]). In this space, the poet should have put the substantive referring to αἰγλήεν[τα],⁸⁰³ the verb linked to it, and the verb governing the accusative of line 26 (a participle, according to Reitzenstein).⁸⁰⁴ Such a concentration of elements is questionable. Less problematic is the solution of Gigli Piccardi: it is not attested elsewhere, but is echoed by a similar expression of Nonnus.⁸⁰⁵ Furthermore, it does not require any extra verb: the whole line is indeed the instrumental dative of the verb

⁸⁰² See, for instance, **F1**, v. 11.

⁸⁰³ A connection of the participle with the π[α]λιν[δ]ί[ν]ητον ἀνάγκην of the successive verse is implausible (a «dazzling whirling necessity»?).

⁸⁰⁴ As an alternative, we should think to a single verb governing both αἰγλήεν[τα] + substantive (v. 25) and π[α]λιν[δ]ί[ν]ητον ἀνάγκην (v. 26). Otherwise, we should move the verb connected to the accusative of line 25 to the preceding verse. Both hypotheses are quite difficult to sustain.

⁸⁰⁵ Cf. *D.* III 356. The scholar highlighted also that the idea of a necessity moving the matter is part of the Hermetic doctrine: cf. 1990, 123. That would be another proof of the philosophical preparation of our poet.

linked to αἰγλήεν[τα].⁸⁰⁶ Livrea's proposal is possible as well. Like Zieliński, he referred π[α]λιν[δ]ί[νητον to the οὐρανὸν of line 27 and placed a verb after it. Unlike the Polish philologist, he avoided the heavy accumulation of indicatives by inserting the participle ἐλίξας. The beginning of line 27 allows us to determine the subject of this section of the poem, namely the curvature of heavens: the poet says that Hermes οὐρανὸν ἐσφαίρωσε, "rounded the sky". After that, the verse presents the sequence κατέστραφ[: in all probability, it corresponds to the indicative aorist κατέστραφ[ε ("turned"), as supposed by West. The scholar hypothesized a reconstruction of the whole verse: οὐρανὸν ἐσφαίρωσε κατέστραφ[ε τ' ἐς κλίσιν ἄρκτων ("he curved the sky and turned it to the incline of poles").⁸⁰⁷ The proposal is reliable: as Gigli Piccardi remarked, the poem alludes to the incline of celestial poles in line 34 (see below); moreover, a similar expression can be found in Nonnus.⁸⁰⁸ From a linguistic point of view, the reading introduces also an enclitic τε connecting κατέστραφ[ε with the preceding ἐσφαίρωσε: since the two verbs refer to the same object (= οὐρανόν), the presence of the particle could provide a further element of confirmation. The curvature of the heavens is a typical element of ancient cosmogonies: it is mentioned by Plato in the *Timaeus*,⁸⁰⁹ and developed in Hermetic doctrines.⁸¹⁰ It is evoked by Nonnus, whose verses sound not so different from our passage.⁸¹¹ A similar expression is used also by Gregory of Nazianzus: αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα / οὐρανὸν ἀστερόεντα κυκλώσας, θαῦμα μέγιστον, / ἡελίῳ μῆνη τε διαυγέα ("but later you curved the starry sky, the greatest marvel, radiant for the light of the Sun and the Moon").⁸¹² The passage was quoted by Wyss as another point of contact

⁸⁰⁶ See Gigli Piccardi's translation of the passage: «per prima cosa (volgendo il fuoco) splendente (e scintillante) con il vortice indicibile della necessità che gira su se stessa, etc.» (1990, 81).

⁸⁰⁷ Cf. 1963, 171. The reading – marked by the scholar with a cautious «vielleicht» – was accepted by Gigli Piccardi (1990, 71), Livrea (2002, *loc. cit.*), and Gambetti (cf. *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁸⁰⁸ Cf. *D.* II 527; XIV 7. Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 124.

⁸⁰⁹ Cf. 34B.

⁸¹⁰ Cf. *CH* VIII 3, 2–3.

⁸¹¹ Cf. *D.* XXV 389; XLI 297.

⁸¹² Cf. *Carm.* 527, 6–8.

between our papyrus and Gregory.⁸¹³ Once again, the similarities between the two passages must be referred more to the literary conventions of cosmogonic narrations, than to a direct contact. Gregory adapts the Biblical narration to epic language.⁸¹⁴

v. 28. ἑπτὰ δέ μιν ζώναις διεκόσ[μεν, ἑπτὰ: the division of the sky into seven parts corresponding to the sun, the moon, and the five planets (Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn) is already in Plato. The philosopher described the universe as a sphere containing the rotating bands of the planets.⁸¹⁵ The scheme was developed by the astronomers Eudoxus and Callippus, who substituted concentric spheres for the bands increased their number.⁸¹⁶ The system of the planetary spheres, canonized by Aristotle,⁸¹⁷ enjoyed great success in western culture until the seventeenth century.⁸¹⁸ For our passage, the reference to seven celestial bodies seems to contradict what the poet writes in **F2**, vv. 1–2, that the light of the sun and the moon is still absent after the separation of land and water. I shall confront such a contradiction when commenting those lines (see below). The integration διεκόσ[μεν was proposed by Reitzenstein⁸¹⁹ and accepted by the following editors.⁸²⁰ The presence of the verb διακοσμέω perfectly fits the representation of Hermes, the god who creates a κόσμος (cf. **F1**, v. 3) with a ῥάβδος διακοσμήτειρα (cf. **F1**, v. 4). The last section of the line has been completed in different ways: Reitzenstein concluded it with the words ἑπτὰ δ' ἐπῆσαν (“seven were set upon”), connecting them to the substantive of the following verse (see below).⁸²¹

⁸¹³ Cf. 1949, *loc. cit.*

⁸¹⁴ It must be noted also that the sun and the moon are already present in Gregory's narration. In our poem, they will arrive later (cf. **F2**, vv. 1–4).

⁸¹⁵ Cf. *Tim.* 38c–d. See also Pizzoli 2008, 135–147.

⁸¹⁶ See Neugebauer 1975, 677–685; Lloyd 1996, 173.

⁸¹⁷ Cf. *Met.* 1073b 1–1074a 13.

⁸¹⁸ For a detailed analysis of the question, see the massive work of Duhem 1959.

⁸¹⁹ Cf. 1901, 55.

⁸²⁰ Cf. Jacoby (*FGrHist* 637 *loc. cit.*), Page (1941, *loc. cit.*), Heitsch (1965, *loc. cit.*), Gigli Piccardi (1990, 71); Livrea (2002, *loc. cit.*), and Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁸²¹ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*

Such a reading was accepted by Jacoby,⁸²² Page,⁸²³ and Heitsch.⁸²⁴ Gigli Piccardi pointed out that the expression is not attested elsewhere, but noted also that the anaphora of number seven can be found in Plato⁸²⁵ and in the *Corpus Hermeticum*:⁸²⁶ for this reason, she removed in her edition the imperfect of ἔπειμι and just left the numeral.⁸²⁷ A different solution was provided by Livrea, whose reading is διεκόσ[μεεν, ἐπτὰ μάλ' αὐτως ("ordered, and in the very same way seven [...])".⁸²⁸ Gambetti adopted the same solution.⁸²⁹ It maintains the numeral ἐπτὰ, adding an expression (μάλ' αὐτως) which is widely attested in hexametric literature.⁸³⁰

v. 29. ἄστρον ἡγεμονῆς ἀλήμονε[ς]: the line refers to the planets, disposed along the seven areas of the sky. The celestial bodies are defined "wanderer lords of stars". The image has a philosophical background: the Hermetic *Asclepius* notes that *septem sphaerae quae vocantur habent οὐσιάρχας, id est sui principes*.⁸³¹ The Homeric adjective ἀλήμων is used as an attribute of planets also in *AP* IX 25, 3.⁸³² Reitzenstein gave a different interpretation of it: he reads the line as ἄστρον ἡγεμονῆς, ἄλλῃ ὧν [τείρεα δινεῖ ("the lords of stars, whose extraordinary movement is circular").⁸³³ A similar text was provided by Zieliński: ἄστρον ἡγεμονῆς, ἄλλῃ ὧν [μοῖραν ὑφαίνει ("the lords of stars, whose fate is to wander").⁸³⁴ Both hypotheses go against the text of the papyrus: the mu following the eta of ἀλήμονε[ς] was noted by

⁸²² Cf. *FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*

⁸²³ Cf. 1941, *loc. cit.*

⁸²⁴ Cf. 1965, *loc. cit.*

⁸²⁵ Cf. *Tim.* 38C.

⁸²⁶ Cf. *CH* I 16, 7–8.

⁸²⁷ Cf. 1990, 71; 125.

⁸²⁸ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.*

⁸²⁹ Cf. *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*

⁸³⁰ See, for instance, *Apol. Rhod.* III 1250; *Arat.* I 21, 260, 452, etc.; *Eudox.* F 10, 3 Lasserre; *Ach. Tat. Isag. Exc.* 28, 19.

⁸³¹ *Ascl.* 19 (319, 5). For a similar use, see also *CH* I 9, 3–4. Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 125.

⁸³² Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 126.

⁸³³ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*; the same reading was provided by Jacoby (cf. *FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*) and Page (1941, *loc. cit.*).

⁸³⁴ Cf. 1941, 120.

Keydell too.⁸³⁵ Livrea concluded the line with the words *ὡκὺ θεόντες* (“which move fast”).⁸³⁶ The image is not impossible, but the sequence is not attested elsewhere.

v. 30. ἄλλου νέρ[τ]ερος ἄλλος, ἐπήτρ[ιμοι: the planets are placed “one under the other”. As Gigli Piccardi rightly noted, the image originates from the structure of the universe, conceived by our poet as a series of concentric spheres (cf. **F1**, v. 28).⁸³⁷ Reitzenstein’s integration ἐπήτρ[ιμοι (“close, thronged”)⁸³⁸ was accepted by all editors.⁸³⁹ From a metrical point of view, its reliability is revealed by the attestations of the adjective in Greek literature: when used in poetic texts, it is normally placed in the same position (= in the fourth foot).⁸⁴⁰ It highlights the strict connection between the celestial bodies. Different integrations have been proposed to complete the line. Reitzenstein concluded it with the participle ἡλάσκοντες (“wandering”);⁸⁴¹ Pack preferred the present indicative ἡλάσκουσι (“wander”);⁸⁴² Gigli Piccardi – following a suggestion by Livrea – chose the imperfect ἐστιχώοντο (“marched in rows”) instead.⁸⁴³ Determining the correct integration is not possible: yet, some considerations are necessary. The participle ἡλάσκοντες is attested only in the late Byzantine age, and never in poetic texts.⁸⁴⁴ The situation is better for the form ἡλάσκουσι, which is used by Homer⁸⁴⁵

⁸³⁵ Cf. 1936, 465.

⁸³⁶ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.* The same text in Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁸³⁷ Cf. 1990, 126.

⁸³⁸ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*

⁸³⁹ Cf. Jacoby (*FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*); Page 1941, *loc. cit.*; Heitsch 1965, *loc. cit.*; Gigli Piccardi 1990, *loc. cit.*; Livrea 2002, *loc. cit.*; Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁸⁴⁰ See, for instance, the Homeric examples from *Il.* XVIII 211, 552; XIX 226. Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 126–127 for a more complete list.

⁸⁴¹ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.* The reading was accepted by Jacoby (*FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*), Page (1941, *loc. cit.*), and Heitsch 1965, *loc. cit.*

⁸⁴² Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 71.

⁸⁴³ Cf. 1990, *loc. cit.* The integration was inserted by Livrea in his edition: cf. 2002, *loc. cit.* The same is made by Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁸⁴⁴ The only attestations are in Theophyl. 110, 30; Mich. Chon. II 61 (100, 23); Philoth. Cocc. *Antirrh.* VI 950.

⁸⁴⁵ Cf. *Il.* II 470.

and other poets.⁸⁴⁶ Livrea's hypothesis is supported by Apollonius of Rhodes,⁸⁴⁷ Aratus,⁸⁴⁸ and Nonnus.⁸⁴⁹ Further elements can be provided by the metric uses of the words: the form ἐστιχόωντο is frequently placed at the end of the hexameter;⁸⁵⁰ such a use is less attested for Pack's integration.⁸⁵¹ These considerations allow us to rank the three hypotheses on the basis of their reliability: Livrea's text is the most plausible; it is followed by the integrations of Pack and Reitzenstein.

v. 31. πάντοθι δ' αἰθερίῳ[ο πόλ]ου περὶ χ[: the line presents two lacunas, the former following the sequence αἰθερίῳ[, the latter involving the end of the hexameter. Different possibilities have been suggested to integrate them. Misreading some letters, Reitzenstein reported the line as follows: πάντοθι δ' αἶθρον ὁμοῦ περὶ χ[("everywhere, at once, the fire around [...]").⁸⁵² He interpreted the text as a reference to the fixed stars.⁸⁵³ Since this reading does not follow that of the papyrus, we can put it aside. A different interpretation was suggested by Heitsch, who noted it in his critical apparatus: πάντοθι δ' αἰθερίῳ[ο πόλ]ου περὶ χ[άσμα τιταίνων ("expanding everywhere the chasm around the ethereal axis").⁸⁵⁴ Integrated in this way, the line would introduce the following verse, where Hermes fixes the earth at the center of the universe (see below). The god would be represented finding a place for the element around the cosmic axis. Heitsch's hypothesis was accepted by Gigli Piccardi.⁸⁵⁵ In doing so, she noted that the reading is not free of problems: one, the integration of the former

⁸⁴⁶ Cf. Emped. B121, 17 D.-K.; Lycoph. *Alex.* 575, Dion. Per. *Orb. Des.* 675; Syn. *Aegyp.* I 1, 24.

⁸⁴⁷ Cf. I 30. The passage was quoted also by Reitzenstein (1901, *loc. cit.*) to confirm his integration of ἐπήτρ[ιμοι.

⁸⁴⁸ Cf. XXXVIII 224.

⁸⁴⁹ Cf. 372.

⁸⁵⁰ See, for instance, Hom. *Il.* II 92, 516, 602; III 266, etc. Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 127.

⁸⁵¹ The form is attested at the end of the line only in Homer (*Il.* II 470), Empedocles (B121, 13 D.-K.), and Synesius (*Aeg.* I 1, 24).

⁸⁵² Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.* (the same text is in Jacoby: cf. *FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*; see also Page 1941, *loc. cit.*).

⁸⁵³ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*

⁸⁵⁴ Cf. 1965, *loc. cit.*: the apparatus reports the hypothesis with a question mark.

⁸⁵⁵ Cf. 1990, 71.

lacuna risks being too long for the space at disposal; and two, the substantive χάσμα is not attested in other epic texts.⁸⁵⁶ Probably acting from the former difficulty, Livrea substituted πόλ]ου with the shorter ῥό]ου, “stream”.⁸⁵⁷ From a narrative viewpoint, Heitsch’s hypothesis is plausible: the image of Hermes shaping the ethereal axis fits the narration of F1, vv. 26–30 (where the god works with the seven skies: see above) and anticipates the contents of lines 32–33 (the position of the earth at the center of the universe: see below). For the integration of the line, a couple of remarks are necessary. First, the scant space following αιθεριῶ[is not an insurmountable obstacle: as Gigli Piccardi herself pointed out, the omicrons of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 480 are sometimes no bigger than an ink spot.⁸⁵⁸ Second, whereas the match between αἰθήρ and πόλος is attested,⁸⁵⁹ that of αἰθήρ and ῥόον is not. A passage of Nonnus shows how the two concepts fit together with difficulty. While describing the deluge,⁸⁶⁰ the poet represents the natural upheaval caused by the disaster playing with language. His poetic images put together elements which normally refer to different contexts. One of these images involves the sky: Nonnus notes that the rain was so abundant ὅττι καὶ αὐτός / ἄπλοος ἀφριόωντι ῥῶφ κυμαίνεται αἰθήρ (“that even the not navigable ether was covered by foamy streams”).⁸⁶¹ The “foamy streams” are attributed to heaven because they are not a normal feature of it. For these reasons, I preferred Heitsch’s πόλ]ου to Livrea’s ῥό]ου. For Finally, I decided to leave the end of the line as it is. Although the presence of the substantive χάσμα is not impossible in our passage, its epic use is not confirmed by other parallels. Similar problems are raised by the participle τιταίνων: it fits the narrative, but cannot be confirmed. Indeed, nothing impedes our poet opting for a different verb, or – if he used τιταίνω – for a different tense.

⁸⁵⁶ Cf. 1990, 128–129. Χάσμα is mainly used by meteorological works: see, for instance, Arist. *Meteor.* I 5.

⁸⁵⁷ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.* (the same reading was adopted by Gambetti, *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁸⁵⁸ Cf. 1990, 128.

⁸⁵⁹ See, for instance, Athen. *Deipn.* II 57, 26.

⁸⁶⁰ Cf. *D.* VI 210–388.

⁸⁶¹ Cf. *D.* VI 357–358.

v. 32. μέσσην γαῖαν ἔπ[η]ξ[εν] ἀκι[νήτοις ἐνὶ δεσμοῖς: having described the curvature of heaven and its division into seven parts (see above), the poet evokes the fixing of the earth at the center of the universe. In doing so, he follows the geocentric model theorized by Plato and Aristotle.⁸⁶² Wyss listed this verse among the hypothetical sources of Gregory of Nazianzus: since the hypothesis also involves line 35, I shall discuss it later.⁸⁶³ The aorist ἔπ[η]ξ[εν] (< πῆγνυμι, “to fix, to stick”) is the result of Reitzenstein’s integration; the scholar is also responsible for the final ἀκι[νήτοις ἐνὶ δεσμοῖς (“with immovable chains”).⁸⁶⁴ The two proposals have been accepted by later scholars.⁸⁶⁵ As Gigli Piccardi observed, what makes πῆγνυμι a plausible integration is the technical value of the verb in ancient cosmogonic texts (“to fix, to consolidate”): passages from Heraclitus,⁸⁶⁶ Aelius Aristides,⁸⁶⁷ and the *Corpus Hermeticum*⁸⁶⁸ confirm it.⁸⁶⁹ The second integration reflects another important aspect of ancient geocentrism, i.e. the steadiness of earth at the center of the world. Explained by Aristotle as a consequence of the weight of earthly components,⁸⁷⁰ it is attributed by our poet to the “immovable chains” of Hermes. Such an image recalls what Plato wrote in the tenth book of the *Republic*. Narrating the voyage of Er’s soul after death, the philosopher notes: καὶ ἰδεῖν αὐτόθι κατὰ μέσον τὸ φῶς ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τὰ ἄκρα αὐτοῦ τῶν δεσμῶν τεταμένα—εἶναι γὰρ τοῦτο τὸ φῶς σύνδεσμον τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, οἷον τὰ ὑποζώματα τῶν τριήρων, οὕτω πᾶσαν συνέχον τὴν περιφορὰν (“and there, in the midst of the light, they saw the ends of the chains of heaven let down from above: for this light is the belt of heaven, and holds together the circle of the universe, like

⁸⁶² Cf. Plat. *Tim.* 40b, 8–c, 1; Arist. *De Cael.* II 14, 296b. Between Plato and Aristotle, the model was developed by the astronomers Eudoxus of Cnidus and Callippus. For a general perspective on the model and its importance in western culture, see Crowe 1990.

⁸⁶³ See the commentary to **F1**, v. 35.

⁸⁶⁴ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*

⁸⁶⁵ Cf. Jacoby (*FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*); Page 1941, *loc. cit.*; Heitsch 1965, *loc. cit.*; Gigli Piccardi 1990, 71; Livrea 2002, *loc. cit.*; Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁸⁶⁶ Cf. *Alleg. Hom.* 56, 3 B.

⁸⁶⁷ Cf. 43, 11 K.

⁸⁶⁸ Cf. *CH* XIII 17, 6; *F* 23, 51, 3 Festugière–Nock.

⁸⁶⁹ Cf. 1990, 129–130. The scholar provides further examples of this technical use.

⁸⁷⁰ Cf. *De Cael.* I 277b 22. See de Paoli 2013, 23–27.

the under-girders of a trireme”).⁸⁷¹ Given the deep philosophical background of our poet, it is plausible that he had this passage in mind while writing his lines. From a metrical point of view, the integration of Reitzenstein finds a confirmation in Nonnus: the poet frequently uses the dative δεσμῶ / δεσμοῖς in the same clause.⁸⁷²

vv. 33. – 34. ἐς δ’ αἶθωνα νότον κρυμώ[δεα τ’ ἄρκτον ἔτεινε / λοξὸν ἀκινήτοιο [κ]αὶ ἡ[σύ]χ[ου ἄξονος οἶμον: having fixed the earth at the center of the universe, Hermes stretches the earthly axis between the two poles. Both lines 33 and 34 were integrated by Reitzenstein.⁸⁷³ Given the presence of νότον in the former half of line 33, the insertion of ἄρκτον in the latter is quite obvious.⁸⁷⁴ A further confirmation comes from the adjective κρυμώδης (“frozen”): our poet links it to the substantive ἄρκτος in another passage of the poem (cf. **F 2**, v. 15). The final ἔτεινε, its use is confirmed by two passages of Plato: in the *Republic*, the philosopher refers the verb to the light (διὰ παντὸς τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς τεταμένον φῶς, “a light extended through the heaven and the earth”); in the *Timaeus*, to the earth (γῆν δὲ [...] ἰλλομένην δὲ τὴν περὶ τὸν διὰ παντὸς πόλον τεταμένον, “the earth [...] clinging around the pole, which stretches through the universe”).⁸⁷⁵ Both cases involve the description of a cosmic structure. Line 34 provides two important features of the earthly axis: on the one hand, its steadiness (the poet defines it ἀκίνητος, “immovable”, and ἥσυχος, “quite”); on the other hand, its “slanting path” (λοξὸν [...] οἶμον), that is, the inclination. The former aspect confirms what the poet has said in line 32, that the earth is chained to its place (see above). The latter involves another scientific doctrine of antiquity, namely the ἑγκλισις of the celestial axis.

⁸⁷¹ *Rep.* 616 B–C. The translation is of Benjamin Jowett: <http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/republic.11.x.html>.

⁸⁷² E.g. *D.* I 49; II 52; IV 357; VII 318; XI 497; XV 140; XLII 452 (= the only attestation in the plural). Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 130. As the scholar noted, Nonnus’ poem confirms also Reitzenstein’s use of the adjective ἀκίνητος (cf. *D.* XXXVIII 349; XL 497).

⁸⁷³ Cf. 1901, 55. No other scholar called his proposals into question: cf. Jacoby (*FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*); Heitsch 1965, *loc. cit.*; Gigli Piccardi 1990, 71; Livrea 2002, *loc. cit.*; Gambetti (BNJ 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁸⁷⁴ Gigli Piccardi defined it «scontata e obbligata» (1990, 131).

⁸⁷⁵ Cf. *Tim.* 40 B–C; *Rep.* 616 B. Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 131.

Lying in the middle of a universe with an inclined axis, the earth must have an inclined axis too.⁸⁷⁶ Line 34 is also interesting from a lexical point of view. When defining a physical entity, it uses an adjective (ἥσυχος) which normally belongs to the etic sphere.⁸⁷⁷ Plato's influence likely lies behind this choice: the philosopher uses the substantive ἥσυχία in relation to the primeval matter in the *Timaeus*.⁸⁷⁸

v. 35. καὶ πόντου κελάδοντος [: the mention of the “roaring sea” reveals a new phase of Hermes' action. The god focuses on earthly waters. The second hemistich of the line is lost: Reitzenstein,⁸⁷⁹ Jacoby,⁸⁸⁰ Page,⁸⁸¹ and Heitsch⁸⁸² did not intervene on it. Gigli Piccardi was the first to propose an integration: καὶ πόντου κελάδοντος [ἀπείριτα κύματα χεύων (“and pouring out the boundless waves of the roaring sea”).⁸⁸³ To support her hypothesis, she quoted a passage of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* dealing with the same moment of the creation.⁸⁸⁴ Along with it, she listed other sources, such as Heraclitus,⁸⁸⁵ Philo,⁸⁸⁶ and the *Corpus Hermeticum*:⁸⁸⁷ all these text present the image of “pouring” the water on earth. The adjective ἀπείριτος (“boundless”) is attributed to the sea by Homer,⁸⁸⁸ Hesiodus,⁸⁸⁹ and Nonnus.⁸⁹⁰ The integration of Gigli Piccardi was partially accepted by Livrea, whose text reads as follows: καὶ πόντου κελάδοντος [.] . . . α [κύματα χεύων (“and pouring

⁸⁷⁶ For further information, see Dicks 1955, 249.

⁸⁷⁷ The substantive ἥσυχία and its derivatives were of the utmost importance in the Greek and Roman philosophical thinking: cf. Wilhelm 1924 for a collection of evidences and MacMullen 1966, 46–94.

⁸⁷⁸ Cf. *Tim.* 30 A. See Gigli Piccardi 1990, 132.

⁸⁷⁹ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*

⁸⁸⁰ Cf. *FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*

⁸⁸¹ Cf. 1941, *loc. cit.*

⁸⁸² Cf. 1965, *loc. cit.*

⁸⁸³ Cf. 1990, 71.

⁸⁸⁴ Cf. *Met.* I 36–37: *tum freta diffudit rapidisque tumescere ventis / ussit et ambitae circumdare litora terrae.*

⁸⁸⁵ Cf. *Alleg. Hum.* 48, 6 B.

⁸⁸⁶ Cf. *Creat.* 38.

⁸⁸⁷ Cf. V 5 (62, 8).

⁸⁸⁸ Cf. *Od.* X 195.

⁸⁸⁹ Cf. *Theog.* 109.

⁸⁹⁰ Cf. *D.* XXVII 41.

out the [...] waves of the roaring sea”).⁸⁹¹ Both integrations are plausible. Wyss considered this verse one of the sources of Gregory of Nazianzus. As already said, the scholar put it together with line 32 (= μέσσην γαῖαν ἔπ[η]ξ[εν] ἀκι[νήτοις ἐνὶ δεσμοῖς / καὶ πόντου κελάδοντος) and linked it to two verses of Gregory’s *Carmina*: τῷ δ’ ὑπο⁸⁹² γαῖαν ἔθηκας ἐμὸν ἔδος, ἐν δὲ θάλασσαν / γαίης ἀγκαλίδεσσιν ἔδησας (“under it [= the sky] you have placed the earth, my house; you have bound the sea with the arms of the earth”).⁸⁹³ Once again, a direct connection between the two authors should be rejected. Wyss’ link implies the two lines of our poem stand together. But it is not so: after the mention of the earthly chains, the papyrus describes the axis (cf. **F1**, vv. 33–34); the reference to the oceans comes later. While the author of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 480 moves from the organization of the sky to the fixing of the earth and the management of the waters, Gregory follows the Biblical narrative. He starts with the apparition of the light;⁸⁹⁴ then, he presents the creation of heaven,⁸⁹⁵ that of the sun and the moon,⁸⁹⁶ and the separation of water from earth.⁸⁹⁷ The similarities between the two texts are due to the similar topic. For the organization of the material and the choice of images, Gregory and our poet make different choices.

v. 36. μαινομένην, ἀχάλινον, ἀν[] : the image of the “crazy sea” is attested in three passages of Nonnus.⁸⁹⁸ According to Gigli Piccardi, the adjective ἀχάλινος (“unbridled”) reveals that the wind is the subject of the line. Having poured the waters of the oceans on earth, Hermes generates it.⁸⁹⁹ For this reason, the scholar proposes *exempli gratia* the integration μαινομένην, ἀχάλινον, ἀν[ήρυγε ῥοῖζον ἀητῶν, “emitted the

⁸⁹¹ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.* (the same text is in Gambetti’s edition: cf. *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁸⁹² Migne’s edition has ὑπὸ κ.τ.λ.: since, however, the preposition refers to the preceding τῷ δ’, I moved its accent to the first syllable.

⁸⁹³ Cf. *Carm.* 527, 12–13.

⁸⁹⁴ Cf. *Carm.* 527, 5–6.

⁸⁹⁵ Cf. *Carm.* 527, 6–7.

⁸⁹⁶ Cf. *Carm.* 527, 8–11. In our poem, the two celestial bodies are created far later: cf. **F2**, vv. 1–4.

⁸⁹⁷ Cf. *Carm.* 527, 12–14.

⁸⁹⁸ Cf. *D.* IV 189; XXXIX 179, 383. Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1985, 77–78.

⁸⁹⁹ Cf. 1990, 133–134.

crazy and unbridled clamour of the winds”.⁹⁰⁰ The attribution of ἀχάλινον to a substantive indicating noise is plausible. As an examination of its occurrences reveals, the adjective often refers to immoderate words.⁹⁰¹ The passage from this kind of speech to irrational clamour is not difficult. It must be noted, though, that this clamour need not necessarily belong to the wind: it can be attributed to the sea instead. As the following verses show, the poet is describing the separation of earth and water (cf. **F1**, vv. 37–40). While the latter element is continuously mentioned, there is no other reference to the wind (in what we can decipher). For this reason, I would not insert it here, but refer the “crazy and unbridled” noise to the sea. Livrea’s hypothesis goes along the same line: μαινομένην, ἀχάλινον ἀνε[ρροίβησεν ἰωήν, “he swallowed back the crazy and unbridled roaring”.⁹⁰² This reconstruction is not free of problems, though. The scholar inserted in the line a hemistich of Nonnus, ἀχάλινον ἀνερροίβησεν ἰωήν. The poet uses it in three passages of the *Dionysiaca*, always to introduce a speech.⁹⁰³ Since there is no direct speech in these lines, we could try to find a different solution. A possibility is provided by a light modification of Gigli Piccardi’s hypothesis: μαινομένην, ἀχάλινον, ἀν[ήρυγε ῥοῖζον θαλάσσης, “emitted the crazy and unbridled clamour of the sea”. It would also be possible to substitute θαλάσσης with κυμάτων (“of the waves”), but this integration would require a new examination of line 35: indeed, if we accepted the proposals of Gigli Piccardi and Livrea, we would have the substantive κύμα repeated in two consecutive verses (see above).

v. 37. ἀλλὰ μὲ[ν] εἰς ἕνα κόλπον ἀολ[λ] : lines 35 and 36 have described the power and the strength of the sea (see above). Line 37 shows how Hermes manages to win over its resistance. Such a change of perspective is revealed by the adversative conjunction opening the verse (ἀλλά, “but”). The reading of the following letters has been differently interpreted: the sequence με is followed by a hole; the

⁹⁰⁰ Cf. 1990, *loc. cit.*

⁹⁰¹ See, for instance, Eur. *F* 492, 4 Nauck; Aristoph. *Ran.* 838; Plato *Leg.* 701 C; Luc. *Pseud.* 32.

⁹⁰² Cf. 2002, 23 (the same reading in Gambetti, *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁹⁰³ Cf. *D.* XXI 134; XXXIII 117; XXXIV 195.

successive letter is not clear. After it, we can read the series ισενα. Reitzenstein,⁹⁰⁴ Jacoby,⁹⁰⁵ Page,⁹⁰⁶ Heitsch,⁹⁰⁷ and Gigli Piccardi⁹⁰⁸ interpreted the passage in this way: ἀλλὰ μέσαις ἓνα κόλπον, “but in the middle [...] a gulf”. I preferred to adopt the solution of Livrea (accepted also by Gambetti): ἀλλὰ μὲ[ν] εἰς ἓνα κόλπον, “but in a single gulf”.⁹⁰⁹ It fits better with the successive verb. As Gigli Piccardi highlighted, the last traces of the line can be linked only to the verb ἀολλίζω (“to gather together”), or to one of its derivatives. The hypothesis of the scholar, that the verse contained a participle of the verb (ἀολλίζων? ἀολλίσας?), is particularly convincing. The successive line contains an indicative (see below): the presence of a participle in our passage would avoid the heavy juxtaposition of two independent clauses.⁹¹⁰ If we add the participle of ἀολλίζω to the reading of Livrea, the sentence easily works: ἀλλὰ μὲ[ν] εἰς ἓνα κόλπον ἀολλίζων / ἀολλίσας, “but gathering/having gathered [...] into a single gulf”.⁹¹¹ Another good aspect of the reconstruction is the disappearance of the uncomfortable μέσαις (“in the middle”): hypothesizing a feminine plural substantive in the dative matching with it is quite hard. Since the poet is speaking of a gulf, we should link the adjective to the waters contained by the basin: they would be *in the middle* of the lands.⁹¹² Yet, we must note also that, if the waters were mentioned by the line, they should be the object (= the accusative!) of ἀολλίζω. If so, what other substantive could be attributed to μέσαις? It is better to get rid of it. Livrea completed the verse with the words μάλα χερσὶ, “with his hand”. This integration leaves the line without an object: if we accept it, we should link the participle to an accusative in the following verse (the other possibility, that the object of

⁹⁰⁴ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*

⁹⁰⁵ Cf. *FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*

⁹⁰⁶ Cf. 1941, *loc. cit.*

⁹⁰⁷ Cf. 1965, *loc. cit.*

⁹⁰⁸ Cf. 1990, *loc. cit.*

⁹⁰⁹ Cf. Livrea 2002, *loc. cit.*; *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*

⁹¹⁰ Cf. 1990, 136.

⁹¹¹ Livrea (2002, *loc. cit.*) and Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*) opted for the second possibility.

⁹¹² Gigli Piccardi interpreted the line in this way, and identified the internal gulf as the Mediterranean Sea: cf. 1990, 135.

ἀολ[λίζων / ἀολ[λίσας is in v. 36, is scarcely reliable).⁹¹³ But there is another option: that the accusative governed by ἀολλίζω has been lost with the last syllables of the verse. Just as an example, we could complete the line so: ἀλλὰ μὲ[v] εἰς ἓνα κόλπον ἀολ[λίζων / ἀολ[λίσας μέλαν ὕδωρ, “but gathering/having gathered the black water into a single gulf”. The expression μέλαν ὕδωρ is used already by Homer, who refers it to the sea: except for a single case, the poet always inserts it at the end of his hexameters.⁹¹⁴ Hermes is represented while collecting the water in a single basin: in doing so, he allows to the land to emerge from the ocean (see below).

v. 38. μακράϊς ἡιόνεσσι χάραξε δ[: the line is governed by the aorist χάραξε (“he cut”). The reference of line 37 to a gulf and the mention, in this verse, of “long beaches” (μακράϊς ἡιόνεσσι) reveal the activity of Hermes: he is forcing water into a single basin, allowing the appearance of dry land. It is not by chance that the poet uses the verb χαράσσω: it gives the idea of a separation. As Gigli Piccardi observed, χαράσσω could be used to define the activity of the κτίστης, who “cut” the borders of his city with his plow.⁹¹⁵ The use of this verb in relation to Hermes provides a further element to characterize the god: he does not found only the first city in the world, but also the place in which the city is able to rise. As already stated, the foundation of the cosmos and that of the city are on the same level: the structure of the latter reflects that of the former (cf. **F1**, v. 3). The last section of the line originally contained the object of χάραξε: different possibilities are available to integrate it. On the basis of literary precedents,⁹¹⁶ Gigli Piccardi proposed the periphrasis δ[ιὰ βροχα νῶτα (“the moist surface”).⁹¹⁷ Livrea suggested ἔδ[ος

⁹¹³ Strangely enough, Livrea left the verb without object: as already said, he completed the line with the dative μάλα χερσί; for what concerns the following verse, he integrated it with an accusative which cannot match with ἀολλίζω (see the commentary to **F1**, v. 38).

⁹¹⁴ Cf. *Il.* XVI 161; XXI 202; *Od.* IV 359; VI 91; XII 104; XIII 409. The expression is reported in a different position only in *Il.* II 825.

⁹¹⁵ Cf. 1990, 136–137. For what concerns the Graeco–Roman view of the founders of cities, see Frateantonio – Eder 1999.

⁹¹⁶ Cf. Hom. *Il.* II 159; *Od.* III 142; Hes. *Theog.* 762; Nonn. *D.* XXVI 180; XL 466; XLIII 200. See also *D.* III 217; XXIII 269; XXVIII 237; XXXIX 299.

⁹¹⁷ Cf. 1990, *loc. cit.*

ἡπίροιο (“the seat of land”) instead.⁹¹⁸ The integration was probably suggested by the ἡπίροιο of line 40 (see below). Both possibilities work and it is not possible to determine if one of them is the right one. The verb is normally used in both the senses suggested by the scholars: either with the accusative of the cut material (= the νῶτα of Gigli Piccardi);⁹¹⁹ or, on the other hand, with the accusative of the result of the cut (= the ἔδ[ος of Livrea].⁹²⁰

v. 39. ἡ δὲ πολυπλάγκτων π [: the mention of the mainland in the following verse makes it clear that the poet is referring to the sea (see below). The feminine ἡ δὲ could have been linked to a substantive such as θάλασσα.⁹²¹ It is followed by the plural genitive of the adjective πολυπλάγκτος (“much wandering”). Some authors have used the word as an attribute of the sea, but the situation must be different here.⁹²² Indeed, if we match the sea with the initial ἡ δὲ, we have to refer πολυπλάγκτων to something else. Gigli Piccardi cautiously attributed it to the waves, moving backwards and forwards, or – more uncommonly – to the coasts, “seguite visivamente nel loro perdersi lontano”.⁹²³ I would support the former possibility: although πολυπλάγκτος is linked to the κύματα only by the late Theodorus Metochites,⁹²⁴ a similar construction here is not out of context. Another interpretation was suggested by Livrea, who edits the line as follows: ἡ δὲ πολυπλάγκτων μερό[πων ζείουσα θάλασσα (“the sea, which seethes of wandering

⁹¹⁸ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.* (the same text in Gambetti, *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*). To obtain the epsilon of ἔδος, the editor had χάραξ’. As already said, the reconstruction of Livrea leaves the preceding line without an object (cf. n. 342).

⁹¹⁹ See, for instance, Nonn. *D.* V 376; X 170, 180; etc.

⁹²⁰ E.g. Nonn. *D.* II 628; III 191; V 527; etc.

⁹²¹ So Gigli Piccardi 1990, 71. Another possibility could have been ἄλς, were it not so rare in epic text: while the indirect cases are well attested, the nominative is uncommon. One of the few examples is provided by Oppian, who places it at the end of the line (cf. *Hal.* V 280). Other epics such as Homer, Apollodorus, Quintus, and Nonnus never use it. That makes its presence here quite implausible.

⁹²² Cf. Bacch. *Ep.* 13, 144 (θ[άλασσαν is the result of an integration); *Brit. Mus. Inv.* 1181, F 1v, 3.

⁹²³ 1990, 138.

⁹²⁴ Cf. *Carm.* 16, 66.

mortals”).⁹²⁵ From a formal point of view, the reading works: it must be noted, though, that the mention of men is not convincing in this context. The isolated genitive of πολύπλαγκτος is not the only difficulty with the line: another one comes from the interpretation of the last letters. They have been read in different ways. While Reitzenstein,⁹²⁶ Jacoby,⁹²⁷ Page,⁹²⁸ and Heitsch⁹²⁹ did not recognize any letter after the pi, Gigli Piccardi and Livrea tried to determine them: the former’s version is π . . ιερῶ[;⁹³⁰ the latter’s μερο[.⁹³¹ The different sequences are due to the difficult reading of the text. For this reason, I preferred to return to the line as it is reported by Heitsch. I did not transcribe the letters following π, but just noted the six spaces they originally occupied.

v. 40. νήχεται ήπείροιο κασιγνήτης ξ[: the line is opened by the verb νήχω (“to swim”). As Gigli Piccardi pointed out, its use in this context is quite peculiar. In order to refer it to the sea, we should interpret it in a wider sense, such as “fluctuate”.⁹³² The poet describes the results of Hermes’ action: water and land coexist side by side like brothers. The brotherhood of the elements is not an invention of our text: it is affirmed by other authors as well, such as Philo.⁹³³ Heitsch was the first to integrate the conclusion of the verse: his text is ξ[νὶ κόλπῳ, “in a gulf”.⁹³⁴ The editor developed the mention of the gulf of line 37 (see above). His proposal was partially accepted by Livrea, whose edition has ξ[νὶ κόλποις, “in gulfs”.⁹³⁵ Even if they cannot be demonstrated, both integrations are possible.

⁹²⁵ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.* (the same in Gambetti, *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁹²⁶ Cf. 1901, 55.

⁹²⁷ Cf. *FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*

⁹²⁸ Cf. 1941, *loc. cit.*

⁹²⁹ Cf. 1965, *loc. cit.*

⁹³⁰ Cf. 1990, 70.

⁹³¹ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.* (see also Gambetti, *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁹³² The same possibilities are provided by its Latin counterpart (*natare*): cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 137.

⁹³³ Cf. *Aeter. Mun.* 61.

⁹³⁴ Cf. 1965, *loc. cit.*

⁹³⁵ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.* (see also Gambetti, *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

v. 41. ἄξονα δὲ σφίγγουσι δὺν πόλοι ἀμφοτέρωθεν: the line was completed by Reitzenstein, who has added the adverb ἀμφοτέρωθεν, “on both sides”.⁹³⁶ The integration, deriving from a passage of Aratus (καὶ μιν πειραίνουσι δὺν πόλοι ἀμφοτέρωθεν, “and the two poles fasten it (= the sky) from both sides”),⁹³⁷ has been accepted by all editors.⁹³⁸ It is not easy to determine why the poet mentioned again the two poles after the shaping of the terra firma: the following line is too incomplete to understand the sense of this section (see below). Gigli Piccardi suggested that the poles are evoked again because the earthly axis “è seguito nel suo attraversamento di tutta la superficie terrestre e quindi anche dei mari” (1990, 132).⁹³⁹ Given the bad conservation of line 42, we cannot verify the hypothesis.

v. 42. .] . ομεναι [. .] ι . λ . . ι . περ[: just a few letters of the line are readable. The sequence ομεναι could belong to a middle/passive participle plural (present, future, or perfect): if so, its subject would be hard to determine. A reference to the δὺν πόλοι of line 41 (see above) is not possible: πόλος is a masculine substantive, whereas our hypothetical participle is feminine. Similar difficulties involve the last sequence (περ[]): too many possibilities are available to integrate it.

v. 43.]χ[ωρ]η παρακέκλιτα[ι: what remains of the line echoes a verse of Apollonius of Rhodes. When referring to the Gulf of Sirte, the poet writes: ἡερίη δ’ ἄμαθος παρακέκλιται (“misty dunes lay beside”).⁹⁴⁰ According to Gigli Piccardi, our passage could similarly refer to a region laying along a river or by the sea.⁹⁴¹ The mention of a κόλπον in line 37 (see above) and the adjectives of lines 44 and 45 (see below) support the hypothesis. The poet is describing the separation of the earth from the water: in this passage, he could have presented the former (the]χ[ωρ]η of our line) laying beside the latter. In this light, we could

⁹³⁶ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*

⁹³⁷ Cf. I 24.

⁹³⁸ Cf. Jacoby (*FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*); Page 1941, *loc. cit.*; Heitsch 1965, *loc. cit.*; Gigli Piccardi 1990, 73; Livrea 2002, *loc. cit.*; Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁹³⁹ To support her interpretation, the scholar quoted Manetho (B[A] 20–21).

⁹⁴⁰ Cf. IV 1239. For further information on the episode, cf. Livrea 1987.

⁹⁴¹ Cf. 1990, 138. For similar uses of the verb, see Livrea 1973a, 349.

consider these verses specular to lines 39 and 40 (see above). The latter section presents the water “swimming” next to the mainland; the former evokes the mainland laying next to the water.

v. 44.]χθαμαλ[ή]ν ξ[: the adjective χθαμαλός (“low, near the ground”) is used by Theocritus as an attribute of Egypt (χθαμαλὰ Αἴγυπτος, “low Egypt”).⁹⁴² That made Gigli Piccardi hypothesize that our line originally introduced the Nilotic region.⁹⁴³ The reference to sand in the following verse supports the identification (see below). Given the Hermopolitan *humus* of our poem, a special mention of Egypt in the context of the creation would be not surprising: it would reflect the local traditions concerning the antiquity of the city and its region.⁹⁴⁴

v. 45.] . ου θινώδε[ος; what remains of the line seems to report the genitive of the adjective θινώδης, “sandy”. The two letters preceding the word could belong to the substantive governing it. It is possible also that this substantive originally followed the adjective. This idea was supported by Livrea, who integrated the text in this way: θινώδε[ος αἰγιαλοῖο (“of the sandy beach”).⁹⁴⁵ The hypothesis is possible, but not demonstrable because of the scanty text at our disposal. The allusion to sand supports the interpretation of Gigli Piccardi, who linked the χθαμαλ[ή]ν of line 44 to Egypt (see above).

vv. 46. - ?]θον ὄλην [/] . . . [/ ... : the last lines of the page have been lost. In all probability, they were not many.⁹⁴⁶

F 2

Source date: fourth / fifth century AD.

vv. 1. - 2. ούπω] κύκλος ἔην Ὑπερίονος, οὐδὲ καὶ αὐτή / εἰλιπόδων εὐληρα βοῶν <έτινάσσε> Σελήνη: the poem is

⁹⁴² Theocr. 17, 79.

⁹⁴³ Cf. 1990, 138–139.

⁹⁴⁴ See the introduction.

⁹⁴⁵ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.* (see also Gambetti, *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁹⁴⁶ See the introduction.

approaching one of its most important sections, i.e. the creation of the sun and the foundation of the first city. In order to introduce the two events, the poet summarizes the situation through two negative images: he notes that – at this point in the narration – the sun and the moon are still absent. The only available light comes from the stars (cf. **F2**, v. 4). The note goes against the contents of **F1**, vv. 28–30, where the poet describes the division of the sky into seven zones: since he mentions seven “wanderer lords of stars”, he must have considered also the sun and the moon (see above). Reitzenstein explained the contradiction by hypothesizing a “Contamination”.⁹⁴⁷ In a similar manner, West suggested that lines 1–4 were originally placed in a different section.⁹⁴⁸ Gigli Piccardi resorted to the concept of “poetica dell’*ἔκφρασις*” instead.⁹⁴⁹ She observed that the structural unity of the poem was not the main goal of our author, who was far more interested in composing a succession of rich and various scenes.⁹⁵⁰ These hypotheses need to be discussed. Concerning those of Reitzenstein and West, it must be said that the idea of a textual alteration is not plausible. The papyrus was written by a single hand: there is no trace of a second one.⁹⁵¹ Therefore, if a contamination has taken place, it must have been done at an earlier stage. We must hypothesize the existence of another manuscript, written by someone (the poet himself?) and altered by someone else.⁹⁵²

⁹⁴⁷ Cf. 1901, 64.

⁹⁴⁸ Cf. 1963, *loc. cit.*

⁹⁴⁹ Cf. 1990, 55–56. The scholar borrowed the definition from Gagliardi 1984, 71.

⁹⁵⁰ The explanation of the scholar deserves to be extensively quoted: «quello che salta agli occhi da questo modo di procedere è un tipo di narrazione che si affida più alla successione di quadri, in qualche modo in sé compiuti, piuttosto che ad uno svolgimento logico dei fatti da un punto di vista cronologico. Si tratta in altre parole di un ulteriore esempio di quella “poetica dell’*ekphrasis*”, che caratterizza in linea generale la poesia epica tardoantica: alla rottura dell’unità narrativa si sostituisce una composizione che predilige il particolare rispetto all’insieme, che si affida spesso a schemi retorici già collaudati e che in tal modo finisce per perdere di vista un’ordinata struttura narrativa» (1990, 56).

⁹⁵¹ See the introduction.

⁹⁵² If the contamination had been made by the same person who wrote the first version, we could reasonably presume that this person would have corrected his work, adapting the lines to his new conception.

This text would have been copied at a later time by the copyist of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481. If things had gone that way, why did the copyist not correct the text, giving it better cohesion? The absence of changes would mean that – in his opinion – the poem was correct as it was, structural mistakes included. In other words, that the copyist shared the already quoted “poetica dell’ἐκφρασις”. Going a bit further, we might refer the same poetics to the contaminator, who altered the lines without adapting the structure. The same difficulties would be present if we identified the contaminator with the copyist of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481. As this brief examination shows, the hypotheses of Reitzenstein and West needs that of Gigli Piccardi to work. *Rebus sic stantibus*, three scenarios are available: a) an anonymous author wrote the poem, without mistakes; then, a second person contaminated some parts of it, without conforming the rest to the new inceptions; a third person finally copied the contaminated version into *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481. The second and the third authors were influenced by the literary tendencies of their age and did not take into consideration the structural problems of the composition; b) the second and the third persons of point a coincide: a single author altered the poem on Hermopolis and transcribed it to our papyrus; he did not realize the contradictions of the new product (if he did it, he did not care); c) the author who composed the poem was influenced by late antique literary vogue and developed his work without much considering its general framework. If we take the three possibilities into account, the last is surely the most plausible: instead of hypothesizing contaminations and multiple versions only on the basis of structural problems, we could just read *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 as a product of its age, with all the good and bad aspects such a situation entails. There is however a fourth possibility: that the incoherence between **F1**, vv. 28–30 and **F2**, vv. 1–4 is just apparent. Let us read again the former lines: “and ordered it in seven zones, seven [...] / [...] the wanderer lords of stars [...], / thronged one under the other [...]”. The bad conservation of the three verses does not allow us to determine which action they describe. Certainly, the poet presents Hermes curving the sky (cf. **F1**, v. 27) and dividing it into seven parts (cf. **F1**, v. 28). It is not possible, though, to identify the role of planets in this movement. The most immediate interpretation is the following: Hermes divides the sky in seven parts and gives each of them to a “wanderer lord of star”; at the

end of the process, the seven celestial bodies are “thronged one under the other”. If this were the correct reading, the poem really would be contradictory. But there is another possibility: that Hermes curves the sky and divides it without creating the planets. Mercury, Venus, Mars, and the others could come later with the sun and the moon. Such an interpretation would avoid a lot of trouble. In order to support it, we need to explain the references of lines 29 and 30. We can read the verses in two different ways. On the one hand, as a declaration of intent: Hermes organizes the seven parts of the sky *in order to* attribute them to the “lords of stars”. On the other hand, as a digression: Hermes divides the celestial dome, which is occupied by the planets, one under the other. If so, the poet would pass from the time of the narrative (= the moment of the creation) to that of the reader. The reliability of this reading could be demonstrated by the reference to human beings in lines 30–32 (see below). For the negative images of these lines (οὐπω [...] ἔην, οὐδὲ καὶ), they are typical of cosmogonic narrations: they are normally used to represent the moment preceding the creation.⁹⁵³ The sun is presented as “the cycle of Hyperion” (κύκλος [...] Ὑπερίονος): although the use of κύκλος as a reference to the star is not uncommon in Greek literature,⁹⁵⁴ its match with Ὑπερίων is not attested anywhere else. Technically speaking, Hyperion was the father of Helios: this division – absent in Homer (who speaks of Ὑπερίων Ἥλιος),⁹⁵⁵ but already clear in Hesiod⁹⁵⁶ – is not followed by our poet. Such a poetic choice need not surprise us: Nonnus calls the sun Ὑπέριον in six passages of the *Dionysiaca*.⁹⁵⁷ The mention of the moon is more extended than that of her brother: the poet says indeed that “Selene did not agitate the reins of the cows, which roll in their gait”. The integration <ἐτίνασσε> was proposed by Reitzenstein, who placed it between εἰλί]πόδων and βοῶν (he has also moved the εὐρηρα of the papyrus –

⁹⁵³ See, for instance, Anaxag. B1 D.–K.; Alcman. F5 Page (= 81 Calame); Emped. B27 D.–K.; D.L. I 4; Apoll. Rhod. I 496–498; Ov. *Met.* I 5–20 (cf. West 1967, 2–3, n. 4–5). The approach is not an exclusive of the Greco–Roman world: cf. Davies 1988.

⁹⁵⁴ E.g. Aesch. *Prom.* 91; *Pers.* 504; *Soph. Ant.* 416.

⁹⁵⁵ Cf. *Il.* VIII 480; *Od.* I 8; XII 133, 263, 346, etc.

⁹⁵⁶ Cf. *Theog.* 1011: Κίρκη δ’ Ἥελίου θυγάτηρ Ὑπεριονίδαο, «Circes, the daughter of Helios, son of Hyperion».

⁹⁵⁷ Cf. *D.* XII 36, 91; XXIII 237, 240; XXXVIII 25, 89.

already corrected in εὔληρα by the copyist himself – before Σελήνη).⁹⁵⁸ Heitsch restored εὔληρα to its original position, and inserted <έτίνασσε> between βοῶν and Σελήνη.⁹⁵⁹ His reading was accepted by the following scholars.⁹⁶⁰ The mention of Selene in lines 1 and 2 makes reference to the traditional representation of her chariot, which was drawn by oxen.⁹⁶¹ Along with lines 3 and 4, the two verses were considered by Wyss one of the sources of Gregory of Nazianzus (see below).

vv. 3. – 4. νύξ δὲ διηνεκέως ἄτερ ἡματος ἔρρεε μούνη / ἄστρον λεπταλέησιν ὑπὸ στίλβουσα βολῆσι: night has always had an important role in cosmogonic texts. The most immediate example comes from Hesiod's *Theogony*, which mentions μέλαινά [...] Νύξ ("the black Night") as the daughter of the primeval Chaos.⁹⁶² Many other texts can be quoted (e.g. the Orphic cosmogonies).⁹⁶³ It must be noted, though, that the primeval goddess evoked by these sources is not the νύξ introduced by our poet. Hesiod and his followers depict the night as a component of the primordial chaos, closely linked to the most ancient deities. In *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481, the elementary chaos has already been defeated by Hermes: the reference to the νύξ [...] μούνη just draws attention to the absence of sun and moon. A confirmation of that is provided by line 4, where the feeble light of stars is cited. While in Hesiod and company the μέλαινά [...] Νύξ is a real character with her own identity, in our poem, we must take it as the simple absence of light. As Gigli Piccardi rightly wrote, the darkness is highlighted again at this point in the poem in order to exalt the forthcoming birth of the sun.⁹⁶⁴ All these consideration are useful to analyze the hypothetical connection between **F2**, vv. 1–4 and Gregory of Nazianzus. In the already quoted poem on chastity, the bishop notes: ὅτε πάντα κελαινὴ νύξ ἐκάλυπτεν. /

⁹⁵⁸ Cf. 1901, 56.

⁹⁵⁹ Cf. 1965, 84.

⁹⁶⁰ Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 75; Livrea 2002, *loc. cit.*; Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁹⁶¹ Cf. Nonn. *D.* VII 247. In other representations, the chariot is drawn by bulls: cf. Nonn. *D.* I 213–218; II 405–406. See Hammond 1992.

⁹⁶² Cf. *Theog.* 123.

⁹⁶³ Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 143.

⁹⁶⁴ Cf. 1990, 143–144.

οὐδ' ἄρ' ἔην ἡοῦς ἐρατὸν φάος· οὐδὲ κέλευθον / ἥελιος πυρόεσσαν
ἐπέσσυτο ἀντολίηθεν. / οὐ μὴν κερόεσσα φαίνεται, νυκτὸς ἄγαλμα
(“because the dark night covered everything. / The lovely light of the
day did not exist yet, nor did / the sun undertake the burning path from
the east. / The horned moon, the image of night, did not shine”).⁹⁶⁵
Keeping in mind what I have said in the preceding notes,⁹⁶⁶ I can make
some remarks. First, Gregory follows the Biblical story and refers to a
darkness which is not due to the absence of the sun, but is total: he
describes the deep obscurity preceding the creation, the complete
absence of light. In this way, he is nearer to the tradition of Hesiod and
his followers than to our poem. Second, the negative references to sun
and moon do not necessarily involve a direct contact between Gregory
and the author of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481: they rather reflect a rhetorical
use of cosmogonic text, i.e. the already seen “anafora della negazione”
(cf. **F2**, vv. 1–2). Once again, the similarities between the two
compositions can be explained as the result of stylistic and literary
consuetudes: a direct connection between their authors is not
necessary.

v. 5. τὰ φρονέων πολιοῖο δι' ἡέρος ἔστιχεν Ἑρμῆς: West defined the
beginning of line 5 “beziehungslos”.⁹⁶⁷ As sustained by Gigli Piccardi,
such a judgment is disputable. Hermes is described while thinking about
something: given the contents of the preceding verses, he is likely
meditating on the absence of clear light. If we look at the line from this
perspective, we realize the importance it has in the economy of
narration: the passage marks the moment in which Zeus' son starts
planning the creation of the sun and the foundation of his city.⁹⁶⁸ It is not
by chance that the image of the god thinking on the absence of light is
followed by the explicit reference to the great air (πολιοῖο δι' ἡέρος): it
explains Hermes' decision and his following acts.⁹⁶⁹

⁹⁶⁵ Cf. *Carm.* 526, 11–14.

⁹⁶⁶ See the commentary to **F1**, vv. 7–8, 24–25, 26–27, 32, 35.

⁹⁶⁷ Cf. 1963, *loc. cit.*

⁹⁶⁸ Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 145.

⁹⁶⁹ The reference to the grey air was taken by Reitzenstein as a proof of his
second interpretation of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481: see the commentary to **F2**, v. 13.

νν. 6. – 9. οὐκ οἶος, σὺν τῷ γε Λόγος κίεν ἄγλαος υἱός / λαίψηραῖς
 πτερύγεσσι κεκασμένος, αἰὲν ἀληθής / ἀγνὴν ἀτρεκέεσσιν ἔχων
 ἐπὶ χεῖλεσι πειθῶ / πατρώου καθαροῦ νοήματος ἄγγελος ὥκύς:

the line introduces the third member of the divine trinity, i.e. the Λόγος. The description of this figure is considerably interesting: on the one hand, it echoes the traditional representations of his father Hermes; on the other hand, it reveals a composite mixture of Egyptian and Greek philosophical doctrines. The two aspects are interdependent. Let us start with the former. The similarities between Hermes and Logos are evident. The latter is defined ἄγλαος υἱός (“noble son”). He is “adorned with light wings” (λαίψηραῖς πτερύγεσσι κεκασμένος), “always true” (αἰὲν ἀληθής), and “equipped with holy persuasion on the precise lips” (ἀγνὴν ἀτρεκέεσσιν ἔχων ἐπὶ χεῖλεσι πειθῶ). Finally, he is defined “the fast messenger of his father’s clear project” (πατρώου καθαροῦ νοήματος ἄγγελος ὥκύς). All these attributes belong to Hermes. The Homeric expression αἰὲν ἀληθής is a typical epithet of the god.⁹⁷⁰ The mention of “light wings” evokes the πέτασος, his winged hat.⁹⁷¹ The reference to πειθῶ draws attention to another feature of the god, i.e. the ability to persuade.⁹⁷² The final line points at the role of the divine messenger.⁹⁷³ These likenesses can be explained by the second element I highlighted, that is, the influence of composite traditions on the depiction of Logos. As already said, a part of Greco-Roman culture used to identify this figure with Hermes.⁹⁷⁴ Such an identification – replaced in our poem by a father-son relationship – likely lies behind the similarities we saw. Hermes and Logos have the same connection the former has with his father Zeus: this aspect allows some considerations. As the first line of **F1** shows, Zeus has given birth to Hermes through a

⁹⁷⁰ Cf. *H. Merc.* 314; 432; *Apoll. Rhod.* IV 1493. For the use of the clause in Homer, see Gigli Piccardi 1990, 147.

⁹⁷¹ Cf. Hurschmann 2000. From the metrical point of view, our poet’s use of the participle κεκασμένος reflects that of the other epic authors: cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 148.

⁹⁷² Cf. Heitsch 1959, 228; Vian 1988, 285.

⁹⁷³ Like the ἄγλαος υἱός of line 6, also ἄγγελος ὥκύς is Homeric: cf. *Hom. Od.* XVI 468. The expression is referred to Hermes also by the Homeric hymn to Ceres (407) and, in a similar way, by Nonnus (*D.* III 374; XXV 313). Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 151.

⁹⁷⁴ See the commentary to cf. **F1**, v. 2.

sort of mitosis: he has separated a part of his energy from himself (cf. **F1**, v. 1). We could attribute the same action to Hermes: in this perspective, Logos could have originally been a part of the god's πολυειδής ἀλκή. Father, son, and grandson compose a triad which seems to anticipate that of the Hermetic work *Poimandres*: Νοῦς, Νοῦς Δεμιουργός, and Λόγος.⁹⁷⁵ We have already seen how Zieliński moves from this resemblance to propose his Arcadian reading of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481: I have also analyzed the difficulties emerging from this hypothesis (cf. **F1**, v. 2). Regardless of the unconvincing Arcadian background, it must be said that the presence of Hermetic elements in the narration is hard to deny. Along with the *Poimandres*, other Hermetic texts describe the close connection between Nous and Logos, placing the latter in a prominent position. I will give two examples. The treaty *On Intelligence and Perception* says that ἡ δὲ νόησις ὑπὸ τοῦ νοῦ, ἀδελφὴ οὖσα τοῦ λόγου (“the intelligence is under the mind, being the sister of the speech”).⁹⁷⁶ A passage of the work *On the Common Mind to Tat* teaches: ὁ γὰρ μακάριος θεὸς Ἀγαθὸς Δαίμων ψυχὴν μὲν ἐν σώματι ἔφη εἶναι, νοῦν δὲ ἐν ψυχῇ, λόγον δὲ ἐν τῷ νῷ, τὸν οὖν θεὸν τούτων πατέρα (“the blessed god Agathos Daimon said that the soul is in the body, the mind in the soul, and the speech in the mind: god is their father”).⁹⁷⁷ Other books of the corpus present different views on the topic (the *Kleis*, for instance, which places ὁ νοῦς ἐν τῷ λόγῳ, ὁ λόγος ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ, ἡ ψυχὴ ἐν τῷ πνεύματι, “the mind in the speech, the speech in the soul, the soul in the spirit”),⁹⁷⁸ but such a divergence need not surprise us: the *Corpus Hermeticum* is not (and does not want to be) a coherent corpus of texts dealing with fixed and shared doctrines.⁹⁷⁹ The representation of Logos does not only echo Hermetic teaching: when analyzing it, one could also find elements of other philosophical schools. The reference to the truth in line 7 exemplifies that. The link between λόγος and ἀλήθεια is stated by the Neoplatonic Porphyry, who presents

⁹⁷⁵ Cf. *CH I* 9. See also *CH I* 6, 2–8.

⁹⁷⁶ *CH IX* 1, 9–10.

⁹⁷⁷ *CH XII* 13, 9–12.

⁹⁷⁸ *CH X* 13, 2.

⁹⁷⁹ See the introduction.

the latter as one of the components of the former.⁹⁸⁰ The same is declared by the Christian Irenaeus.⁹⁸¹ When reading the passage, Zieliński interprets it as a polemic answer to Plato, who highlights the ambiguity of speech in his *Cratylus*.⁹⁸² Given the deep philosophical preparation of our author,⁹⁸³ the hypothesis is not implausible. The portrait of Logos also echoes Egyptian elements: some of his features, in particular, likely come from the traditional representation of Thot (the Egyptian counterpart of Hermes; that brings us again to the first point of my analysis, i.e. the similarities between the divine messenger and his son: see above). As Reitzenstein pointed out, one of the inscriptions of Dendera says that Thot “ruht auf der Wahrheit”:⁹⁸⁴ it recalls the αἰὲν ἀληθείης of line 7. To conclude: the Logos of our poem encompasses different elements of different origin. The four lines introducing him are influenced by classical and post-classical mythological *topoi*, by Hermetic and Neoplatonic doctrines, and finally by local Egyptian traditions. The result of all these components is not a pure allegory, but a figure equipped with a specific identity and a precise role in the narrative.⁹⁸⁵

v. 10. σὺν τῷ ἔβη γαῖάνδε με[* χρυσόρραπις Ἑρμῆς:** the incipit of the line echoes that of **F 1**, v. 6. Reitzenstein was the first to understand that the subject of passage cannot be but Hermes: therefore he inserted the name of the god at the end of the line, leaving the rest undeciphered (σὺν τῷ ἔβη γαῖάνδε με[τ *** Ἑρμῆς, “with him Hermes went to the earth [...]”).⁹⁸⁶ Gigli Piccardi tried to reconstruct the whole verse: σὺν τῷ

⁹⁸⁰ The other three components are πίστις («faith»), ἔρως («love»), and ἐλπίς («hope»): cf. *ad Marc.* 24.

⁹⁸¹ Cf. *Adv. Haer.* I 29, 2. In this case, one must take the identification of Christ with the divine Logos into account: see the commentary to **F2**, vv. 6–9. That explains also the apparent influence of this passage on Gregory of Nazianzus (cf. Wyss 1949, *loc. cit.*).

⁹⁸² Cf. 408 C. The hypothesis of the scholar is inserted in his Arcadian interpretation of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481: cf. **F1**, v. 2.

⁹⁸³ See, for instance, the commentary to **F1**, vv. 13, 32.

⁹⁸⁴ Cf. 1901, 56.

⁹⁸⁵ Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 31. See the commentary to **F1**, v. 2.

⁹⁸⁶ Cf. 1901, 56. The same reading is in the editions of Jacoby (*FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*), Page (1941, *loc. cit.*), and Heitsch (1965, 84).

ἔβη γαῖάνδε με[χρ]ι [χρυσόρραπις Ἑρμῆς, “with him Hermes, the god with the golden wand, arrived on the earth”.⁹⁸⁷ A different text was suggested by Livrea: σὺν τῷ ἔβη γαῖάνδε με[νε]ι[ν χρυσόρραπις Ἑρμῆς, “with him Hermes, the god with the golden wand arrived to the earth to remain”.⁹⁸⁸ In my edition, I inserted the epithet χρυσόρραπις (“with golden wand”), as proposed by Gigli Piccardi: its use as an attribute of Hermes is well attested in literature.⁹⁸⁹ Furthermore, it perfectly fits the image of the god as it is given by our verses: let us recall the ῥάβδον χρυσήν διακοσμήτειραν of **F1**, v. 4 (see above). For the integration of με[, I must confess my uncertainty. Both the proposals of Gigli Piccardi and Livrea fit the narrative context and are well attested in literature: yet, they do not convince me. The insertion of μέχρι raises two problems: first, its final iota is short and the position requires a long vowel;⁹⁹⁰ second, it has the same meaning of the enclitic –δε attached to γαῖαν (= “up to, to”). The hypothesis of Livrea is problematic for a different reason: it implies Hermes’ wish to remain on earth. The poem does not give any sense of going in that direction. To conclude, I decided to leave the lacuna after με[: the sequence should be integrated with another long syllable. Line 10 provides important information: it reveals that Hermes has come to the physical world with his son. In other words, Λόγος has been with him since his crossing of the ether. In spite of such a continuous presence, Hermes’ son is named only at this point of the composition: the poet aims to highlight his role in the most important part of the narration, i.e. the creation of the sun and the foundation of the city.⁹⁹¹

v. 11. πάπταινε[ν δὲ ... ω . [.] αι : the epic imperfect of παπταίνω (“to look about one with a sharp, searching glance”) is the only understandable sequence of the line.⁹⁹² The particle δέ is added by Gigli Piccardi to make the coordination with the preceding verse

⁹⁸⁷ Cf. 1990, 75.

⁹⁸⁸ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.* (see also Gambetti, *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

⁹⁸⁹ See, for instance, Hom. *Od.* V 87; X 277.

⁹⁹⁰ We could solve this problem adding a sigma at the end of it (μέχρσις).

⁹⁹¹ So Gigli Piccardi 1990, 36.

⁹⁹² Reitzenstein (1901, *loc. cit.*) interpreted it as a participle (παπτ[αίνων, «looking for»).

explicit.⁹⁹³ Hermes is presented looking for something. According to Gigli Piccardi, the god is searching for the best place to create the sun: the interpretation moves from a passage of Nonnus concerning Phaeton.⁹⁹⁴ Since, however, the following lines explicitly introduce the foundation of an ἄστυ (cf. **F2**, vv. 12–14), I would not refer Hermes' search to the sun, but to that city.

vv. 12. – 14. χῶρον [έύκρη]τον διζήμενος, ένθα πολίσση / ἄστυ . [.] . στον, ὃ κεν πεπολισμένον εἴη / ἄξιον ἥελίοιο βολήν ευφεγγέα δέχθαι: lines 12–14 announce Hermes' project. The god aims to found a city, which could receive the first light of the sun. In order to do that, he looks for a χῶρον [έύκρη]τον ("tempered place") to lay the foundations. The integration [έύκρη]τον was suggested by Reitzenstein.⁹⁹⁵ It anticipates the conclusion of Hermes' search: as the following verses show, the god does not found his city either in the cold regions near the poles (cf. **F2**, vv. 15–20), or in the hot area between the tropics (cf. **F2**, vv. 20–26), but in the intermediate zone (cf. **F2**, vv. 27–32). Moreover, it provides further proof of the Egyptian context of our poem: the ancient sources usually attribute the adjective εὐκρατος to Egypt.⁹⁹⁶ The match between the verb πολίζω ("to build a city") and the substantive ἄστυ ("city") is already attested in Apollonius of Rhodes.⁹⁹⁷ Similar forms can be found in Nonnus as well.⁹⁹⁸ ἄστυ is followed by a lacuna: as Gigli Piccardi observed, it must include one or two epithets of the city.⁹⁹⁹ Moving from the readable sequence]στων,¹⁰⁰⁰ the scholar suggested the integration μεγ' ἡδ' ἄσβε]στων ("great and everlasting"): the adjective ἄσβεστος – usually an attribute of fire – fits well the so-called "blaze island".¹⁰⁰¹ As possible alternatives, she proposed also μέγ'

⁹⁹³ Cf. 1990, 153.

⁹⁹⁴ *D. XXXVIII* 318–320 (cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, *loc. cit.*).

⁹⁹⁵ Cf. 1901, 57.

⁹⁹⁶ Cf. Just. II 1, 5; Cleom. I 6; Diod. I 10; *Schol. Apoll. Rhod.* IV 262.

⁹⁹⁷ Cf. IV 1472–1473 (see Reitzenstein 1901, *loc. cit.*).

⁹⁹⁸ Cf. *D.* V 85; IV 305; XII 104; XL 424 (see Gigli Piccardi 1990, 153–154).

⁹⁹⁹ Cf. 1990, 155.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Reitzenstein (1901, *loc. cit.*), Jacoby (*FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*), and Heitsch (1965, *loc. cit.*) have]εστων. After the substantive ἄστυ, the edition of Page does not continue.

¹⁰⁰¹ See also *LSJ*, 255. For the definition «blaze island», see the introduction.

ἡδὲ κύδι[σ]τον (“great and most honored”) and περικλή[ι]στον (“far-famed”).¹⁰⁰² The latter option were accepted by Livrea and Gambetti.¹⁰⁰³ Given the many possibilities at our disposal, I left the lacuna empty. An integration is also necessary in the following verse. What remains of the text says: “worthy of receiving the brilliant [...]” (ἄξιο[ν ***]ην ἐυφεγγέα δέχθαι).¹⁰⁰⁴ Heitsch integrated it in the following way: ἄξιο[ν ἥελίοιο μορφ]ην ἐυφεγγέα δέχθαι (“worthy of receiving the brilliant form of the sun”).¹⁰⁰⁵ His reading was partially modified by Gigli Piccardi: following a suggestion of Livrea, she substituted μορφ]ην with βολ]ην (“ray”).¹⁰⁰⁶ As an alternative, she hypothesized also the integration αἴγλ]ην (“splendor”).¹⁰⁰⁷ Both hypotheses are plausible: for this reason, while inserting the former in the text of my edition, I mentioned the latter in the apparatus. The image of a city receiving the first light of the sun is not only evoked by *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481: a similar subject is presented by Nonnus’ *Dionysiaca*. When describing the foundation of Berytus, the poet presents the city ἐῷ παμμήτορι κόλπῳ / Ἥελίου νεοφεγγές ἀμεργομένη σέλας αἴγλης (“plucking the new-born light of the solar splendor in the all-mothering breast”).¹⁰⁰⁸ These hexameters are particularly important because they form the basis of Reitzenstein’s second hypothesis. Having published the *editio princeps* of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 in 1901, the scholar returned to the poem twenty years later. In

¹⁰⁰² Cf. 1990, 75 (the scholar inserted the second integration at the suggestion of Livrea).

¹⁰⁰³ Cf. Livrea 2002, *loc. cit.*; Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*). According to the former scholar, this verse should be linked to **n. 3, F6**, v. 25: they both mention the sun light (cf. Livrea 2002, 21). For a discussion of Livrea’s hypothesis, see the introduction. For what concerns this match, the mention of the sun is not enough to demonstrate that the two lines are linked.

¹⁰⁰⁴ So the line was reported by Reitzenstein (1901, *loc. cit.*) and Jacoby (*FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*).

¹⁰⁰⁵ Cf. 1965, *loc. cit.*

¹⁰⁰⁶ Cf. 1990, *loc. cit.* The substantive βολή is referred to the light of celestial bodies by authors such as Apollonius of Rhodes (I 607; II 943; III 1389–1390; etc.), Oppian (*Hal.* III 52; V 410–411; *Cyn.* IV 53), Nonnus (*D.* II 500; XXVII 18; *Par.* I 12), and Pamprepus (IV 8). For an extended list, cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 145. The same reading was accepted by Livrea (2002, *loc. cit.*) and Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

¹⁰⁰⁷ Cf. 1990, 157.

¹⁰⁰⁸ *D.* XLI 92–93.

his study on the mythology of Aion,¹⁰⁰⁹ he quoted the passage of Nonnus attributing the foundation of Berytus to Cronos.¹⁰¹⁰ The similarities between Nonnus' presentation of Berytus and the papyrus of Strasbourg made him conclude that the latter was "ein Preislied auf Berytos" and a source of the former.¹⁰¹¹ To sustain his hypothesis, the scholar pointed out the antiquity of Berytus, which is presented by Nonnus as the προτέρη city of the earth,¹⁰¹² founded before the sun and the moon.¹⁰¹³ Some observations are necessary. A preliminary consideration involves the text of Nonnus, which offers two different versions of Berytus' foundation: the former presents Cronos as the founder of the city,¹⁰¹⁴ the latter – more recent – Aphrodite.¹⁰¹⁵ All the references noted by Reitzenstein come from the earlier legend: having received from his wife Rhea a soup aiming to make him vomit his children, the suffering Cronos founds Berytus. At a first sight, the presentation of the city looks very similar to what *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 says of the nameless ἄστν. Like the poet of the papyrus, Nonnus remarks that Berytus was founded before humankind (οὐ γένος ἀνδρῶν [...] ἦεν).¹⁰¹⁶ Before the appearance of the sun and the moon, the city was surrounded by a "dark mist" (κυανέης [...] ὁμίχλης), which evokes the "gray air" crossed by Hermes (cf. **F2**, v. 5).¹⁰¹⁷ Finally, Berytus is presented as the "seat of Hermes" (ἔδρανον Ἑρμείας).¹⁰¹⁸ Some remarks are necessary, though. Let us start from the mention of Hermes. The god is not quoted alone: the Berytus of Nonnus is not only the "seat of Hermes", but (just to quote some of the epithets of vv. 143–154) also the "sister of Aion" (Αἰῶνος ὁμόσπορε),¹⁰¹⁹ the "ground of Dike" (Δίκης πέδον),¹⁰²⁰ the "sweet shrine

¹⁰⁰⁹ Cf. Reitzenstein 1921, 151–250.

¹⁰¹⁰ Cf. *D.* XLI 68.

¹⁰¹¹ Cf. 1921, 182.

¹⁰¹² Cf. *D.* XLI 83.

¹⁰¹³ Cf. *D.* XLI 86–96.

¹⁰¹⁴ Cf. *D.* XLI 51–154.

¹⁰¹⁵ Cf. *D.* XLI 155–427.

¹⁰¹⁶ *D.* XLI 88–89.

¹⁰¹⁷ Cf. *D.* XLI 95.

¹⁰¹⁸ *D.* XLI 145.

¹⁰¹⁹ *D.* XLI 144.

¹⁰²⁰ *D.* XLI 145.

of Bacchus” (Βάκχου τερπνὸν ἔδεθλον),¹⁰²¹ the “house of Zeus” (Διὸς δόμος),¹⁰²² the “court of Ares” (Ἄρεος αὐλή),¹⁰²³ and the “Orchomenus of the Graces” (Ὀρχομενὸς Χαρίτων).¹⁰²⁴ Hermes has no particular position in the list. The narration of the poem confirms it: the god has no role in the action. Moreover, Nonnus’ passage completely lacks the cosmogonic afflatus of its supposed source: whereas the founder of the nameless city is presented as a creator god ordering the elements, Cronos builds Berytus to get rid of his pain. The primeval city has no function in the cosmic history: it remains the place when the second Lord of the gods vomited his children.¹⁰²⁵ To summarize: what unifies the two texts is not their narrative content, but the rhetorical framework supporting it; in particular, the choice of images expressing the idea of antiquity (e.g. the reference to the sun and the moon, the absence of man, the flash of the first light, etc.). The images used by Nonnus to celebrate the old age of Berytus perfectly reflect what the rhetorical tradition of the age prescribed;¹⁰²⁶ the reading of a passage of Menander Rhetor shows this.¹⁰²⁷ The presence of similar notes in *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 does not necessarily mean that Nonnus took it as a model. It may simply reveal that he and the anonymous poet made reference to the same literary system. To find the expressions he used in his digression of Berytus, Nonnus had just to turn to the rhetorical training of his age: it made a wide *repertoire* of *topoi* available to him.¹⁰²⁸ Almost certainly, the teachings were available to his colleague too. In conclusion, I suggest rejecting the hypothesis of Reitzenstein: there is no narrative correspondence between the papyrus of Strasbourg and the *excursus* of Nonnus. The elements which are common to the two texts are due to the

¹⁰²¹ *D.* XLI 147.

¹⁰²² *D.* XLI 148.

¹⁰²³ *D.* XLI *loc. cit.*

¹⁰²⁴ *D.* XLI 149.

¹⁰²⁵ Cf. *D.* XLI 69–76.

¹⁰²⁶ Cf. Pernot 1995, 209–210.

¹⁰²⁷ *Men.* I 354 21–28. For the text of the passage and a brief commentary, see the introduction.

¹⁰²⁸ About the *topoi*, cf. Pernot 1995, 129–249. Just to make a couple of examples: like Menander, Nonnus mentions the Arcadia «older than the moon» (v. 90: Ἀρκαδίη προσέληνος); moreover, he defines Sardis, «the agemate of the sun» (v. 88: Σάρδιες, Ἡελίοιο συνήλικες).

late antique rhetoric training and were probably shared by a great number of texts.

v. 15. ἀλλ' [οὐ] ἐπὶ κρυμώδεας ἄρκτους: the narration of Hermes' research is based on a series of negative images. Before revealing the seat of the god's foundation, the poet lists the places discarded by Hermes because of their bad features. In doing so, he addresses one of the most important scientific theories of antiquity, that of the climatic zones (the κλίματα). Attributed to Parmenides by Posidonius of Apamea,¹⁰²⁹ the division of the world εἰς πέντε ζώνας ("in five zones") was extensively analyzed by Aristotle's *Meteorologica*.¹⁰³⁰ As the philosopher wrote, δύο γὰρ ὄντων τμημάτων τῆς δυνατῆς οἰκεῖσθαι χώρας, τῆς μὲν πρὸς τὸν ἄνω πόλον, καθ' ἡμᾶς, τῆς δὲ πρὸς τὸν ἕτερον καὶ πρὸς μεσημβρίαν [...]. ταῦτα δ' οἰκεῖσθαι μόνα δυνατόν, καὶ οὐτ' ἐπέκεινα τῶν τροπῶν [...], τά θ' ὑπὸ τὴν ἄρκτον ὑπὸ ψύχους ἀοίκητα ("the zones in which it is possible to live are two: one near the upper pole, where we are; the other near the other pole, the southern one [...]. It is possible to live only in these areas: beyond the tropics is not possible [...]. The regions below the Bear cannot be inhabited either because of the cold temperature").¹⁰³¹ As it is possible to see from this passage, Aristotle refers to the five areas with the substantive τμήμα, "zone": the first to use the more common name κλίματα was probably Eratosthenes.¹⁰³² Along with the poet Aratus, the Hellenistic philologist was principally responsible for the success of the climatic model in the Greco-Roman world.¹⁰³³ *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 is an example of this wide diffusion. The regions rejected by Hermes in his research are those inhabitable according to the climatic model (= the area between the tropics and the regions near the poles: see below). A comparison between our passage and other literary texts describing the climatic

¹⁰²⁹ Cf. A44a D.-K.

¹⁰³⁰ The philosopher probably owed the idea to Eudoxus of Cnidus: cf. Hübner 2002.

¹⁰³¹ *Meteo.* 362a.

¹⁰³² Cf. Honigmann 1929, 24–30. The choice of κλίματα did not impede Eratosthenes to keep using other synonym: see, for instance, *Hermes* F 16 Powell, where he speaks of earthly ζῶναι.

¹⁰³³ For an introduction to the model and its diffusion, see Hübner 2002.

zones reveals many similarities, above all concerning the disposition of the material.¹⁰³⁴ Such a likeness could reveal the existence of a scholastic tradition dealing with the topic: the five areas of the world could be one of the *progymnasmata* thought and analyzed during rhetorical training.¹⁰³⁵ Line 15 shows the first area rejected by Hermes: the “frozen north”. The expression ἐπὶ κρυμώδεας ἄρκτους supposedly inspires Reitzenstein’s integration of **F1**, v. 33 (see above). The contents of the lacuna preceding it are not easy to determine. As Gigli Piccardi noted, the text should say something similar to “but he did not build it”: as an example, the scholar proposed the text ἀλλ’ [οὐ δὴ μιν ἔκαμνεν, even if it is too long to enter the empty space.¹⁰³⁶

vv. 16. – 19. πα[.....] μοίραι<ς> χθονὸς οὐνεκα κείναις /]θε βαθὺς περιπέπταται ἀήρ / παλ]υγόμενος νιφάδεσσι / ἐκ]εῖ δ’ ἐπενήνοθε πάχνη: for what we can get of them, the four lines originally depicted the κρυμώδης ἄρκτος. A huge portion of the text has been lost, yet some elements are still recognizable.¹⁰³⁷ Line 17 mentions the βαθὺς [...] ἀήρ (“hazy air”) of the northern region. This image is a *topos*: Eratosthenes’ presentation of earthly zones mentions it as well as other authors.¹⁰³⁸ It can be useful to determine the meaning of the preceding words. As Gigli Piccardi points out, Aristotle used to consider haze as the cause of ice.¹⁰³⁹ Since line 16 cites the phenomenon, one could suppose that the preceding verse originally depicted the northern ice. For this reason, Gigli Piccardi suggested referring the initial πα[either to a tense of the verb παχύνω (“to congeal”), or to an adjective derived from it.¹⁰⁴⁰ It must be noted that the influence of Aristotle on this passage could

¹⁰³⁴ E.g. Cic. *Somn. Scip.* 6, 21; Verg. *Georg.* I 233–239; Claud. *De Rapt. Pros.* I 259–265.

¹⁰³⁵ Cf. Alfonsi 1952, 147 – 148; Gigli Piccardi 1990, 158–159. For an introduction to the *progymnasmata* and their use in ancient schools, see Kennedy 2003.

¹⁰³⁶ Cf. 1990, 159.

¹⁰³⁷ The verses seem to echoes a passage from the *Panegyric of Massalla* (154–157): another hint pointing to the existence of a widely shared tradition. Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 161.

¹⁰³⁸ Cf. Erat. F 16, 2 Powell; [Tib.] III 7, 154; Claud. *Rapt. Pros.* I 264–265.

¹⁰³⁹ Cf. *Meteo.* 347 a.

¹⁰⁴⁰ Cf. 1990, 160.

have been less strong than imagined. While – according to the philosopher – the ice was a consequence of vapor, our poet mentions it before the βαθὺς [...] ἄρη. If he really considered the two elements to be connected, he would have plausibly inverted the order. One should keep in mind that a reference to ice in the presentation of a northern region does not require a philosophical background. It is quite an obvious image. Furthermore, we do not know if lines 16 and 17 were syntactically united. Nothing impedes us considering the former verse as the conclusion of the preceding line and the latter as the beginning of a new unity. The poet could have said that Hermes did not build his city in the northern region (= v. 15) *because of* (οὐνεκα) the icy land in those countries (= v. 16). In spite of these considerations, the presence of παχνῶ at the beginning of line 16 remains a plausible possibility. As an example, one could propose a reading such as follows: πα[χνωσάσης ἐν] μοίραι<ς> χθονὸς οὐνεκα κείναις (“because of the icy ground in those regions”). The genitive of the aorist participle παχνώσασης is not attested in other texts: yet, it fits the meaning of the line and the available space. The nominative παχνώσασα is used by Triphiodorus.¹⁰⁴¹ For line 18, it mentions the snowflakes (νιφάδεσσι). The plural dative is preceded by the final section of a participle (λυγρόμενος), which has been integrated in different ways: Reitzenstein suggested the integration βα[ρ]υγρόμενος (“being oppressed”);¹⁰⁴² Livrea παλ[υ]γρόμενος (“being sprinkled”) instead.¹⁰⁴³ If we consider the meaning of the two possibilities, they are both valuable: the former presents a land oppressed by snow; the latter a land covered by it. I decided to accept the proposal of Livrea: while his hypothesis is confirmed by other attestations,¹⁰⁴⁴ that of Reitzenstein is not. According to Gigli Piccardi, the lost part of line 18 originally included the

¹⁰⁴¹ Cf. *Il. Hal.* 190.

¹⁰⁴² Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.* (the integration has been accepted by Jacoby, *FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*).

¹⁰⁴³ Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 75 (see also Livrea 2002, *loc. cit.*; Gambetti, *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*). Heitsch (1965, *loc. cit.*) did not complete the sequence. Schwarz proposed Ἰθυσόμενος («being rushed»: cf. West 163, *loc. cit.*), but such a reading does not correspond to the traces of the papyrus (cf. Livrea 2002, 30).

¹⁰⁴⁴ Cf. *Hom. Il.* X 7; *Apoll. Rhod.* III 69; *Triph.* 190.

subject of παλινυγόμενος along with an attribute of νιφάδεσσι.¹⁰⁴⁵ The hypothesis is plausible: a similar disposition of the material can be found in **F1**, v. 5 and **F2**, v. 8 (see above). After the mention of snowflakes, line 19 moves to another phenomenon, namely the “hoar” (πάχνη). The substantive is the subject of the perfect ἐπενήνοθε (“heaps”). Homer uses it thrice: on the basis of one of these passages, Reitzenstein integrated the text as follows: οὐλή δ’ ἐπενήνοθε πάχνη (“a thick hoar heaps”).¹⁰⁴⁶ The reading was accepted by Jacoby¹⁰⁴⁷ and Heitsch,¹⁰⁴⁸ but Gigli Piccardi noted that it does not follow the traces of the writing. She suggested therefore a new text: ἐκ]εῖ δ’ ἐπενήνοθε πάχνη, “there haze heaps”.¹⁰⁴⁹ This is the text I inserted in my edition.

v. 20 θνητὸν δέμας· οὐδέ κεν αὔθι: line 20 moves from the frozen north to the hot region between the tropics. The first four feet of the hexameter conclude the presentation of the former region; the last two feet introduce the description of the latter. Six lines have been dedicated to the north (cf. vv. 15–20); the south will occupy one verse more (cf. vv. 20–26). The reference to a “mortal body” (θνητὸν δέμας: the adjective is the result of Reitzenstein’s integration)¹⁰⁵⁰ allows us to understand the content of the preceding lost text: in all probability, the poet was noting how the icy lands were not apt to host life.¹⁰⁵¹ The nexus οὐδέ κεν αὔθι (“nor there would”) echoes the ἀλλ’ [οὐ of line 15 (see above).¹⁰⁵²

¹⁰⁴⁵ The scholar listed some possible adjectives: cf. 1990, 161.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.* The scholar was inspired by Hom. *Il.* X 134 (οὐλή δ’ ἐπενήνοθε λάχνη, «the down was thick»). The other two Homeric passages are *Il.* II 219 and *Od.* VIII 365.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Cf. *FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*

¹⁰⁴⁸ Cf. 1965, *loc. cit.*

¹⁰⁴⁹ Cf. 1990, 77. The same reading is in Livrea (2002, 23) and Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

¹⁰⁵⁰ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*

¹⁰⁵¹ Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 161–162.

¹⁰⁵² Gigli Piccardi (1990, 162) pointed out that the negation οὐδέ κεν αὔθι could also refer to the preceding section: after having remarked that the north cannot be inhabited (= up to the first part of line 20), the poet could have said that the south is not habitable either. Such a connection is not impossible: even so, a link to line 15 remains, in my opinion, the most plausible option.

vv. 21. – 22.] υ . [.] . . . ης /] . . . ρος . [.] . υ : it is not possible to determine the meaning of these two lines. At the end of line 21, Livrea reads the genitive γαίης (“of the earth”), but the reading is not sure.¹⁰⁵³ Given the change of climate shown in line 20 (see above), one can reasonably suppose that the two verses started the presentation of the hot region between the tropics.

vv. 23. – 24.] λθε[.] . ἄλλη /] χις[.] αι λαων : the first legible letters of line 23 (λθε) could belong to many different words. For instance, they could come from an aorist tense of ἔρχομαι (or from its compound derivatives). The absence of further elements does not allow a proper hypothesis. The final letters of the sequence seem to compound the word ἄλλη. There are three possible interpretations of it: one could take it as the concluding section of a longer word (e.g. the conjunctive] βάλλη, “that he/she/it throws”), as the feminine dative of the pronoun ἄλλος (= “to another [one]”), or as the adverb ἄλλη (“elsewhere, otherwise”). The situation is not better for line 24: Gigli Piccardi suggested linking the sequence] χις[to the substantive ῥάχις (“backbone, edge”). She interpreted the following letters (] αι λαων) as the rest of a substantive in the plural genitive. As she noted, the construction ῥάχις + genitive was often used to refer to “il dorso di un monte o la cresta di una foresta”.¹⁰⁵⁴ Another option is available: as Livrea noted in his edition, the final four letters could be read as the genitive λαων (“of men”).¹⁰⁵⁵ In light of this, we could interpret the line as a reference to the absence of men in the subtropical regions: one of the features shared by both the hot zone and the cold one (cf. v. 20).

v. 25.] . . υ . . . [.] φουσ[. . .] σα : the final sequence of line 25 can be integrated in different ways. On the basis of a passage of Nonnus,¹⁰⁵⁶

¹⁰⁵³ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.* (= Gambetti, *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

¹⁰⁵⁴ Cf. 1990, *loc. cit.* The substantive is frequently used in this sense by Nonnus: see, for instance, *D.* V 405; VIII 19; IX 138; XIV 211; etc.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.* (= Gambetti, *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

¹⁰⁵⁶ Cf. *D.* XI 495–496: ἡ δὲ χελιδονίων ανέμων τερψίμβροτον αὔρην / ἔπτυε φουσιόωσα («another puffed out the breath of the swallow-winds, which brings delight to the mortals»). For other examples, see also Opp. *Cyn.* I 262; III 439; *Hal.* I 570.

Gigli Piccardi suggested the reading φυσ[ύω]σα (“having puffed out”), referring it to the winds.¹⁰⁵⁷ The same scholar proposed a longer hypothesis (φύς[ις έοϋ]σα, “being nature”), noting that its length does not overflow the size of the lacuna too greatly.¹⁰⁵⁸ The critical edition of Livrea reports the former proposal.¹⁰⁵⁹ Given the difficult contextualization of the word(s), I preferred to leave the lacuna as it is.

v. 26. περι]έπτα<τα>ι ἄσκιος ἀήρ: the integration περι]έπτα<τα>ι was proposed by Gigli Piccardi on the basis of the parallel expression in line 17 (βαθὺς περιέπταται ἀήρ: see above).¹⁰⁶⁰ It confirms that the sections of the poem concerning the frozen area and the hot one were structured in a similar way. Whereas the northern air is βαθύς (“deep”), that of the subtropical zone is ἄσκιος, “shadowless”: the poet uses this technical adjective – which is normally attested in astronomical works¹⁰⁶¹ – to refer to the monotonous sunny weather of desert regions. Reitzenstein noted the rest of “einige Buchstaben” written upon the sequence επται: he interpreted them “als Correctur”.¹⁰⁶² However – as Gigli Piccardi rightly pointed out – these signs are not a correction to line 26, but a portion of the preceding verse instead.¹⁰⁶³

v. 27.]ε δύο κατὰ θεσμὸν ἔασι: the line introduces the two habitable zones of the earth, i.e. those between the polar regions and the subtropical one.¹⁰⁶⁴ The sequence between the numeral δύο (“two”) and the epic indicative ἔασιν (“are”) has been interpreted by scholars in three different ways: Reitzenstein’s reading is κατὰ κόσμον (“according

¹⁰⁵⁷ Cf. 1990, 162–163.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Cf. 1990, 163.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.* (= Gambetti, *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

¹⁰⁶⁰ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.* All the later editors accepted the proposal: cf. Jacoby (*FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*); Heitsch (1965, *loc. cit.*); Gigli Piccardi (1990, 76); Livrea (2002, *loc. cit.*); Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

¹⁰⁶¹ See, for instance, Cleom. *Cael.* I 7, 73; Ptol. *Synt. Math.* I 1, 107, 18; 108, 5 Heiberg; Theon *Comm. In Ptol. Synt.* 632, 8; 664, 16 Rome.

¹⁰⁶² Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*

¹⁰⁶³ Between five and six letters: cf. 1990, 76.

¹⁰⁶⁴ A similar introduction to the two areas is in Eratosthenes (F 16, 12 Powell) and Cicero (*Somn. Scip.* 6, 21).

to the order”);¹⁰⁶⁵ Schwartz’s is κατὰ βασμόν (“according to the degree”) instead;¹⁰⁶⁶ finally, Gigli Piccardi proposes κατὰ θεσμόν (“according to the law”).¹⁰⁶⁷ From a paleographic point of view, the last reading is the most plausible: as Gigli Piccardi notes, “è chiarissimo il legame che unisce il θ alla vocale precedente”.¹⁰⁶⁸ The substantive θεσμός shares a root with the verb τίθημι (“to set”): it refers to the law as a form of disposition, a kind of organization.¹⁰⁶⁹ Such a meaning explains the use of the word in this context: the temperate zones are two in number because of the natural/divine regulation laying behind the creation.

v. 28. μεσσηγὺς * κ]αὶ ἀκρήτσιο θερείης:** the last section of the verse mentions an “absolute summer”. As the writings of Eratosthenes and other authors confirm, this is a typical feature of the subtropical regions.¹⁰⁷⁰ Such a reference could surprise us: as we get from the text, line 26 closes the description of the hot zones (see above). The best explanation of this new mention was provided by Gigli Piccardi: the poet is saying that the two temperate areas are placed between the cold and the hot ones. As a proof of that, the scholar quoted a line of Eratosthenes dealing with the same material: μεσσηγὺς θέρεός τε καὶ ὑετίου κρυστάλλου (“between the summer and the rainy ice”).¹⁰⁷¹ Following the example of the Alexandrine, Gigli Piccardi put the preposition μεσσηγὺς (“between”) at the beginning of the line.¹⁰⁷² This use – she noted – is confirmed by many epic passages.¹⁰⁷³ Such an interpretation is plausible. The reference to the intermediate position of the temperate regions highlights their main feature, i.e. the μεσότης. As theorized by Aristotle and his epigones (cf. v. 15), the “medium place” of these areas

¹⁰⁶⁵ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.* (so Jacoby, *FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*).

¹⁰⁶⁶ Cf. West 1963, *loc. cit.* (so Heitsch 1965, *loc. cit.*).

¹⁰⁶⁷ Cf. 1990, 77 (so Livrea 2002, *loc. cit.*; Gambetti, *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

¹⁰⁶⁸ 1990, 164.

¹⁰⁶⁹ Cf. *LSJ*, 795.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Cf. Erat. F 16, 6 Powell; *Pan. Mess.* 158; Claud. *Rapt. Pros.* I 261.

¹⁰⁷¹ Cf. F 16, 16 Powell. See Gigli Piccardi 1990, 164–165.

¹⁰⁷² Cf. 1990, 77.

¹⁰⁷³ E.g. Hom. *Il.* V 769; VI 4; XIII 33; XXIV 78; *Od.* IV 845; XV 528; etc.; cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 165.

between the two climatic extremes explains their habitability.¹⁰⁷⁴ In this perspective, that the poet of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 wanted to point out this aspect should not surprise us.

v. 29.] αἰθομένῳ πυρὶ [γεί]των: what remains of line 29 is composed of the adjective γείτων (“neighbor”), the substantive πῦρ (“fire”) and the participle of αἶθω (“to burn”). It represents someone/thing “near to the burning fire”. The interpretation of the verse is not clear. Gigli Piccardi provided two different explanations: a) the line describes the proximity of the temperate lands to the sun (or to the ether); along with the right distance from the poles and the tropics, this closeness was considered one of the causes of a temperate climate;¹⁰⁷⁵ b) the verse develops the image of the preceding line, saying again that the temperate lands are between the cold and the hot extremes: in this light, the “burning fire” should be taken as another definition of the subtropical region.¹⁰⁷⁶ Both hypotheses are possible. For the former, it is true that – at this point in the work – the sun does not exist yet; but the poet could have made a general presentation of the temperate area, without considering the narrative timing of the digression.¹⁰⁷⁷ A reference to the ether would be unproblematic as well.¹⁰⁷⁸ As regards the point b), one could hypothesize before αἰθομένῳ πυρὶ the presence of another dative presenting the cold region. Both hypotheses raise a problem, though. As line 27 says, there are two temperate zones of the earth (see above): yet the subject of line 29 is a singular nominative. To solve the difficulty, Gigli Piccardi suggested a change of subject in the lost portion of the verse.¹⁰⁷⁹ In my opinion, a possible candidate could be the human [γέ]γ[ος] of line 30: on the one hand, it maintains the poet’s focus on the temperate lands (the presence of men is one of the main features of the areas: see below); on the other hand, it explains the singular adjective of

¹⁰⁷⁴ This point reflects Aristoteles’ general ideas on the μεσότης: see Meier 2000.

¹⁰⁷⁵ See, for instance, Diod. III 2, 1. See also Vitruv. I 1; *Paneg. Mess.* 165 – 168. Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 165–166.

¹⁰⁷⁶ Cf. Pind. *P.* 3, 50; Pl. *Leg.* 865 B. See Gigli Piccardi 1990, 166.

¹⁰⁷⁷ See the commentary to **F2**, vv. 1–4 and 30–32.

¹⁰⁷⁸ For the identification of the ether with fire, see the commentary to **F1**, v. 25.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Cf. 1990, *loc. cit.*

our passage. I would also say that the equation “temperate lands = men” allows us to determine the best interpretation of line 29: we just have to take the whole section into account. At first, the poet presents the two temperate areas (v. 27); then, he mentions their intermediate position (v. 28); two hexameters later, he introduces the human race as a typical element of these zones (v. 30). If we interpret line 29 as a reference to the intermediate position of men, we would have a perfect chiasmic structure: first subject – position; position – subject. The plural γένοντο in line 31 reveals a new change of subject. Taking all these elements into consideration, we can take Gigli Piccardi’s second interpretation as the most plausible alternative.

vv. 30. – 32.]θα πολυσπε[ρέω]ν [γέ]ν[ος] ἀνδρῶν /]κλήτοι . . γένοντο / κ]αὶ ἄστεα μοιρηθεῖσαι: the mention of men and cities at this point in the poem might surprise us. Hermes has not created human beings yet. Such an untimely reference is not difficult to explain. As the description of the extreme zones demonstrates, the poet does not present the earthly regions as they appeared to the creator, but as they are in general. Just to offer an example: how could the subtropical region have an “unshaded air” in line 26, if the sun is still absent? The same can be said for the temperate regions: the author depicts them as they normally are, i.e. full of peoples and cities. In all probability, such a stereotyped image came to the poet from his rhetorical training (see above). Whereas the extreme zones are defined by their meteorological features, the temperate are characterized by the human presence. Such a different point of view must not surprise us. As already mentioned, our poet is influenced by Aristotle, who considered the temperate zones the only habitable parts of the earth.¹⁰⁸⁰ From his perspective, the presence of men is something as distinctive as the ice of the poles, or the sun of the tropics. For this reason, they are mentioned here. I already noted how the [γέ]ν[ος] of line 30 could have originally been the subject of the preceding hexameter (see above). Next, the]κλήτοι of line 31 was integrated by West as πολύ]κλήτοι, “called from many lands”.¹⁰⁸¹ Used by Homer as an attribute of the Trojan allies, the adjective is quite

¹⁰⁸⁰ Cf. *Meteo.* 362a: see the commentary to v. 15.

¹⁰⁸¹ Cf. 1990, 77.

peculiar.¹⁰⁸² Gigli Piccardi considered it a compromise between the teachings of Aristotle and the later objections of Posidonius: while the former considered the subtropical areas completely uninhabited, the latter said that people could live even there.¹⁰⁸³ In a synthesis of the two positions, the poet of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 could have mentioned those who were born in the inhospitable countries and “were called” to the temperate ones because of the climatic difficulties.¹⁰⁸⁴ The hypothesis is not impossible. Yet, the fragmentary conditions of the line make a solution to the problem particularly hard to reach. Gigli Piccardi herself highlighted that.¹⁰⁸⁵ Line 32 mentions the building of cities as another feature of temperate lands. The representation echoes that of the *Panegyric of Messalla*: another proof that our poet took his poetic images from a shared and widespread tradition.¹⁰⁸⁶

vv. 33. – 34.] Ὠκ[ε]ανοῖο / πολλῇσιν ἔπω]ν[υ]μήσι δ[έ]δασται: once the poet has terminated the description of earthly zones, he mentions the Ocean, which encircles the whole earth. As line 34 says, it “is divided among many names”. The passage is the result of two main integrations. The former involves the genitive Ὠκ[ε]ανοῖο and was proposed by Heitsch.¹⁰⁸⁷ The latter completes what remains of line 34 and is the result of a “team game”. Correcting the wrong reading of Reitzenstein (νομησιν [έ]δοσκεν, “he gave/assigned to the pastoral [...]”),¹⁰⁸⁸ Heitsch reported the passage as follows:]ν[υ]μήσι δ[έ]δασται (“[...] is divided among [...]”).¹⁰⁸⁹ On the basis of it, West suggested the

¹⁰⁸² Cf. *Il.* IV 438; X 420.

¹⁰⁸³ Cf. Reinhardt 1926, 60–62; Bignone 1936, I 240–241; Alfonsi 1952, 150–151.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Cf. 1990, 168.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Cf. 1990, *loc. cit.*

¹⁰⁸⁶ Cf. *Pan. Mess.* 174.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Cf. 1965, *loc. cit.*; the scholar moves from Reitzenstein’s integration (Ὠ]κ[ε]ανοῖο : cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*). The proposal has been accepted by the later scholars: cf. Jacoby (*FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*); Gigli Piccardi 1990, 77; Livrea 2002, *loc. cit.*; Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

¹⁰⁸⁸ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.* The reading is accepted by Jacoby (*FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*) and developed by Zieliński (1941, 68): the text of the latter is νύμφαις νομησιν ἔδοσκεν («he gave to the pastoral nymphs»). It reflects his interpretation of the poem: see the commentary to **F1**, v. 2.

¹⁰⁸⁹ Cf. 1965, 85.

integration ἐπω]ν[υ]μήσι (“names”).¹⁰⁹⁰ The proposal was later developed by Gigli Piccardi: πολλῆσιν ἐπω]ν[υ]μήσι δ[έ]δαται (“is divided among many denominations”). In doing so, she moved from a passage of Dionysius Periegetes: πάντη δ’ ἀκαμάτου φέρεται σθένος Ὠκεανοῖο, / εἷς μὲν ἑὼν, πολλῆσι δ’ ἐπωνυμίῃσιν ἀρηρώς (“all round is borne the tireless ocean’s might / which, being one, is called by many names”).¹⁰⁹¹ Her reading was accepted by the successive editors.¹⁰⁹² She also suggested inserting a ῥόος] (“current”) at the beginning of the line, supporting the hypothesis with a series of textual parallels.¹⁰⁹³ Although the use of the substantive is not implausible, I preferred not to insert it: the poet could have used other words to refer to the Ocean (e.g. the substantive σθένος, “strength, power”).¹⁰⁹⁴ The reference to the multiple names of the Ocean reveals that our poet was influenced by Stoicism: in particular, he developed the Stoic *topos* of “one being, many names”.¹⁰⁹⁵

vv. 35. – 36.]οι, τῶν δέ τε μέσσ[ο]ς / λεχ]ωῖας Ὠγγίη χθ[ώ]ν: from a textual point of view, the reconstruction of lines 35 and 36 is not easy. For the former verse, the adjective μέσσος (“middle”) is the most plausible reading: it was proposed by Reitzenstein and accepted by all the following scholars except Heitsch (who suggested the feminine μέσσ[η] instead).¹⁰⁹⁶ Reitzenstein also integrated the following line, concluding it with the word χ[οῦ]ν.¹⁰⁹⁷ The scholar took the passage as a

¹⁰⁹⁰ Cf. 1963, *loc. cit.*

¹⁰⁹¹ Cf. *Orb. Des.* 27–28 (translation of Lightfoot 2014, 201).

¹⁰⁹² Cf. Livrea 2002, 23–24; Gambetti, *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*

¹⁰⁹³ E.g. Hom. *Il.* XVI 151; XVIII 402; *Od.* XI 21; XII 1; etc. (cf. 1990, *loc. cit.*). ῥόος] was accepted by Livrea (2002, 23) and Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

¹⁰⁹⁴ The expression σθένος Ὠκεανοῖο is already attested in Homer (*Il.* XVIII 607; XXI 195). It is interesting to remark that the same alternation between ῥόος and σθένος is presented by the textual tradition of Dionysius Periegetes: at line 27, a part of the tradition has ῥόος, a part σθένος instead (cf. Lightfoot 2014, 200–201).

¹⁰⁹⁵ For other examples of this element, see Dion. Per. *Orb. Des.* 7–8; 27–28; [Arist.] *De Mund.* 7 (401a); [Aesch.] *PV* 210. Cf. Lightfoot 2014, 268.

¹⁰⁹⁶ Cf. Reitzenstein 1901, 58. The scholar’s reading ([μ]έσσος) was accepted by Jacoby (*FGrHist* 637, *loc. cit.*) and corrected by Gigli Piccardi (1990, 79). Her version (μέσσ[ο]ς) was accepted by Livrea (2002, 23), Gambetti (*BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*), and myself. *Contra* Heitsch 1965, *loc. cit.*

¹⁰⁹⁷ Cf. 1901, *loc. cit.*

reference to the Nile and tried to reconstruct the missing words: τῶν δέ τε μέσσ[ο]ς [Νεῖλος, ζωογόνον δὲ λεχ]ωῖας Ὠγυγίη χ[οῦ]ν [δέκτο] (“the Nile [...] between them; the fruitful Ogygia received the generative soil”).¹⁰⁹⁸ The first part of this version was inspired by a passage of Dionysius Periegetes: while describing the border mountains of Egypt, he says that τῶν μέσα καλλιρόοιο κατέρχεται ὕδατα Νείλου (“the water of the beautiful-flowing Nile comes down between them”).¹⁰⁹⁹ According to Reitzenstein, the Nile should have been mentioned by the papyrus as the father of the human race.¹¹⁰⁰ The interpretation is fascinating, but goes against the reading of the text: the end of the line clearly reports the sequence χθ[]ν. Even from a narrative point of view, Reitzenstein’s view is difficult to sustain.¹¹⁰¹ The final χθ[]ν confirms the hypothesis made by Wilamowitz, who proposed concluding line 36 with the substantive χθ[ώ]ν (“earth”).¹¹⁰² The proposal has been accepted by all the following scholars.¹¹⁰³ A new attempt at reconstruction was proposed by Livrea: Νεῖλος, τῷ μερόπτεσσι λεχ]ωῖας Ὠγυγίη χθ[ώ]ν / ἄρδεται (“the Nile, by which the fruitful land of Ogygia is watered for the mortals”).¹¹⁰⁴ The hypothesis comes from an observation of Gigli Piccardi, who noted that our two lines could have a structure similar to that of Apoll. Rhod. IV 269–270 (καὶ ποταμὸς Τρίτων εὐρύρροος ᾧ ὑπο πᾶσα / ἄρδεται Ἑβήνη, “the beautiful-flowing river Triton, by which all the Morning-land is watered”).¹¹⁰⁵ In her analysis of the passage, the scholar highlighted how difficult a comprehension of the two lines is, given their fragmentary preservation: in particular, she wondered how to interpret the τῶν of line 35. She found two possible interpretations of the section: a) the poet returns to the earthly zones, noting that Egypt is in the middle of them; or b) he refers to the χῶρος of line 12 (see above), i.e. to the place Hermes is

¹⁰⁹⁸ Cf. 1901, 61.

¹⁰⁹⁹ Cf. *Orb. Descr.* 246.

¹¹⁰⁰ The Egyptian soil should have been the mother: cf. Reitzenstein 1901, *loc. cit.*

¹¹⁰¹ Cf. Gigli Piccardi 1990, 170.

¹¹⁰² Cf. 1942, 218, n. 2.

¹¹⁰³ Cf. Heitsch 1965, *loc. cit.*; Gigli Piccardi 1990, 79; Livrea 2002, *loc. cit.*; Gambetti, *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*

¹¹⁰⁴ Cf. 2002, 30.

¹¹⁰⁵ Cf. 1990, 170.

searching to place the sun.¹¹⁰⁶ I think that a synthesis of the two points could be the right solution. The μέσσο[ο]ς of line 35 could be linked to the χῶρος of line 12: yet, I would not refer this χῶρος to the creation of the sun, but to that of the city instead. Hermes is looking for a χῶρος to lay his foundations: this “place” is μέσσο[ο]ς, in the middle of something. Here we must face the problem of τῶν: what does it refer to? A hint can be provided by line 32, where the poet mentions the human ἄστυα. They could lay behind the pronoun of line 35. After naming the multiform Ocean, the poet could have returned to the temperate zone, saying that the χῶρος of Hermes’ ἄστυ is in the middle of the human cities. By saying that Hermes’ city holds the central position in the human world, the poet is placing it at the center of the temperate region between the northern pole and the southern desert. I do not think a mention of the Nile is necessary: it is true, as Gigli Piccardi pointed out, that λεχ]ωϊὰς refers to the vital power of water:¹¹⁰⁷ yet, I think the adjective could be simply referring to Egypt. The fertility of the region has been a literary *topos* since the time of Herodotus.¹¹⁰⁸ Keeping these elements in mind, I can try to summarize the content of our section. Having described the whole world, from the cold poles to the Ocean, the poet reveals the place chosen by Hermes to found his city. As the adjective μέσσο[ο]ς demonstrates, it is in a central region: the poet names it “Ogygia”. The use of this expression to refer to Egypt is not difficult to interpret. The name is attributed to Egypt by Stephanus of Byzantium: ἀλλὰ καὶ Ὀγυγία ἐκαλεῖτο (“but it was called also Ogygia”).¹¹⁰⁹ Other sources (such as the *Hieroglyphica* of Horapollon) exalt the centrality of the region in the world.¹¹¹⁰ A different interpretation was provided by Zieliński: in order to adapt Ὀγυγίη to his reconstruction,¹¹¹¹ the scholar noted that the name need not necessarily belong to Egypt.¹¹¹² The adjective ὠγύγιος (“primeval, primal”) is used by Dionysius Periegetes

¹¹⁰⁶ Cf. 1990, 170–171.

¹¹⁰⁷ Cf. 1990, 170.

¹¹⁰⁸ Cf. Hd. II 35–99.

¹¹⁰⁹ Cf. *Ethn.* s.v. Αἴγυπτος (α 112 Billerbeck).

¹¹¹⁰ Cf. Hor. *Hier.* 63–64.

¹¹¹¹ See the commentary to **F1**, v. 2.

¹¹¹² Cf. 1941, 68–69.

to define the Arcadian river Ladon.¹¹¹³ The use of the word in this particular context is taken by the scholar as a proof of his Arcadian context. Some remarks are necessary. The examination of the sources shows how many lands were called Ὠγγία in antiquity: along with Egypt, Stephan of Byzantium attributes the name to Boeotia¹¹¹⁴ and Attica,¹¹¹⁵ adding that even the population of Lycia and of the city of Thebe could be defined Ὠγγίοι because of the memory of the king Ogyges.¹¹¹⁶ Furthermore, no source applies the definition to Arcadia. In his *Orbis Descriptio*, Dionysius Perigetes used the adjective to highlight the antiquity of two cities (the Egyptian Thebes¹¹¹⁷ and Tyre),¹¹¹⁸ and of the island of Thasos.¹¹¹⁹ The line presenting the Ladon can be interpreted in the same way. A proof of that comes from the *Commentary* of Eustathius, who writes that the river is defined so διὰ τὴν περὶ αὐτοῦ ἀρχαιολογίαν, “because of the ancient stories concerning it”.¹¹²⁰ To conclude, the identification of Ogygia with Egypt remains the best option.

vv. 37. – 45.]ομαι οἷ ποτὶ π[.] . [. .] /] τὸ δὲ κλέος οὐδεπ . . . θον[/] . ἀντιπέρηθεν ὀρούσας / ἐ]υκτιμένη ἐνὶ Πυθοῖ /]θεοὶ μεγά[λοι] ρ[/]σαν ὅτ’ ἐμ . . [/] . υσι[.]ν . . . [/]ης διζήμε[ν /] . με . [: in spite of its fragmentary character, the last section of the text is particularly interesting. Indeed, it starts with the sequence]ομαι: in all probability, it is the final part of a medium verb in the first person singular and indicates the voice of the poet himself (or of someone speaking on his behalf: an actor? A choir?). This “intrusion” – anticipated by the ἐμὸς πατρώϊος Ἑρμῆς of **F1**, v. 2 (see above) – can be explained in different ways. Gigli Piccardi considered it a conclusion to the tale of the creation: the poet aims to close the narration celebrating the glory of Hermes and

¹¹¹³ Cf. *Orb. Descr.* 417.

¹¹¹⁴ Cf. *Ethn.* s.v. Βοιωτία (β 116 Billerbeck).

¹¹¹⁵ Cf. *Ethn.* s.v. Ὠγγία (ω 3 Billerbeck).

¹¹¹⁶ Cf. *loc. cit.*

¹¹¹⁷ Cf. 249.

¹¹¹⁸ Cf. 911.

¹¹¹⁹ Cf. 523.

¹¹²⁰ *Comm.* 416.

his foundation.¹¹²¹ The hypothesis is possible. However, it must be noted that – at this point of the poem – the creation is not concluded: Hermes has yet to create the two most important elements, the sun and his city. For this reason, I would consider these lines as a sort of interlude introducing the last phase of the action. The importance of the moment required a proper introduction. The glorification of Hermes and his city hypothesized by Gigli Piccardi was likely part of it.¹¹²² The]ομαι opening line 37 can be integrated in many different ways. Moving from a passage of the *Poimandres*, Gigli Piccardi proposed the following reading: πείθ]ομαι ὅς ποτὶ κ.τ.λ. (“I trust/believe in him”).¹¹²³ If interpreted in this way, the line would declare the faith of the poet in the god he is celebrating. Such a reading is possible: it would confirm the Hermetic knowledge of our author. Yet, there are other integrations at our disposal. I would not exclude, for instance, the reading εὐχ]ομαι ὅς κ.τ.λ. (“I pray him [...]"). The verb is well attested in supplications, even in late antique epics.¹¹²⁴ The poet could have asked for help from Hermes in order to continue his narration. The Homeric poems provide a hint to understand line 38. As Gigli Piccardi highlighted,¹¹²⁵ it echoes Homeric expressions such as ὄου κλέος οὐ ποτ’ ὀλεῖται (“his glory shall never perish”),¹¹²⁶ τὸ δ’ ἐμὸν κλέος οὐ ποτ’ ὀλεῖται (“but my glory shall never perish”),¹¹²⁷ or τῶ οἱ κλέος οὐ ποτ’ ὀλεῖται (“his glory will never perish”).¹¹²⁸ These examples reveal that our poet is celebrating the never-ending κλέος of someone or something. Given the context, we could imagine the celebration either of Hermes, or of his city. But nothing excludes a reference to a political personality attending the public reading of the poem (e.g. the Roman emperor, one of his ministers).¹¹²⁹ If so, even the prayer of line 37 could have been addressed to him. Understanding the meaning of the two readable words of line 39 (ἀντιπέρηθεν ὀρούσας, “rising from the opposite side”)

¹¹²¹ Cf. 1990, 171. the apparent conclusion of Heitsch 46, 12–14 supports it.

¹¹²² Cf. 1990, *loc. cit.*

¹¹²³ Cf. 1990, 79. See *Poim.* 32 (19, 6).

¹¹²⁴ E.g. Nonn. *D.* XXI 24; XXIX 63; XXXIII 91.

¹¹²⁵ Cf. 1990, 172.

¹¹²⁶ *Il.* II 325.

¹¹²⁷ *Il.* VII 91.

¹¹²⁸ *Od.* XXIV 196.

¹¹²⁹ See the introduction. See also **n. 3**.

is quite hard: the context is not rich enough to reach safe conclusions. Livrea considers the adverb ἀντιπέρηθεν a reference to Antinopolis, placed on the opposite bank of the Nile, but the hypothesis is scarcely plausible.¹¹³⁰ Particularly interesting is the mention of Delphi in line 40: the city is defined “Pytho, good to dwell in” (ἐ]υκτιμένη ἐνὶ Πυθοῖ). Such a reference is not easy to contextualize: why a poet dealing with the foundation of Hermopolis should have mentioned the city of Apollo is mysterious. In order to explain that, Gigli Piccardi returned to Nonnus’ description of the founding of Berytus (cf. vv. 12–14): at a certain point in the narration, the poet lists a series of illustrious cities (e.g. Tarsos, Sardis), remarking that they did not exist when Berytus was founded.¹¹³¹ Gigli Piccardi suggested a similar passage here. The hypothesis is plausible: in Nonnus as well the polemical comparison takes place at the beginning of the narration. Going a bit further, we can suppose that the poet of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 did not mention only Delphi, but other centers as well: if so, the reference to those cities must have occupied more space than a single verse. It probably continued in the following lines (if it did not start directly in line 39). Given the Egyptian context of our poem, the expression θεοὶ μεγά[λ]οι (“great gods”) is meaningful. As Gigli Piccardi remarked, such a cultural epithet is of oriental origin and is frequently used to indicate the Egyptian gods.¹¹³² The scholar linked the invocation to a prayer, supporting the hypothesis with the reference to sacrifices in line 43 (θ]υσί[η]ν ἱ[ε]ρήν, “holy sacrifice”).¹¹³³ A couple of observations are necessary. First, if the poet has started a list of cities in line 40, it is quite difficult to suppose that he has already finished it in line 41. We should think either that he interrupted it to pray to the “great gods”, or that he never started it. Second, the reading θ]υσί[η]ν is not the only possibility at our disposal: Schwartz, for instance, interpreted the sequence as χρ]υσι[ο]ν (“gold?”);¹¹³⁴ Livrea proposed]ρυσί[η]ν (“property”: maybe a reference to the holy properties of the

¹¹³⁰ Cf. 2002, 21: the line should be linked to **n. 3, F6**, v. 17. See the commentary to the verse.

¹¹³¹ Cf. *D. XLI* 85–86; 97–98.

¹¹³² Cf. 1990, 174–175.

¹¹³³ Cf. 1990, 79, 175.

¹¹³⁴ Cf. West 1963, *loc. cit.*

Oracle of Delphi?) instead.¹¹³⁵ As already stated, the context is too inadequate to understand these lines properly. A possible explanation for the θεοὶ μεγάλοι of line 41 could be their involvement in the foundation of one of the cities of the list. Since the rest of the passage does not give any name, it is not possible to say who these gods are and what city they have founded after Hermopolis. The last two lines of the fragment do not provide any other information.

¹¹³⁵ Cf. 2002, *loc. cit.* (= Gambetti, *BNJ* 637, *loc. cit.*).

5.

ASCLEPIUS

Introduction

No collection of fragmentary authors includes Asclepius' *Patria of Anazarbus*. The exiguity of the material and its bad conservation explain the situation. The only testimony concerning the author comes from an anonymous epigram of the *Palatine Anthology* (cf. **T1**), who presents him as Κωνσταντινιάδης Ἀσκληπιάδης, "Asclepiades, the son of Constantine". The phrase does not respect the meter of the line. As has been noticed, the only reliable way to solve the impasse is to correct the name of the poet, reading it as Ἀσκληπιός. The corruption from Ἀσκληπιός to Ἀσκληπιάδης was probably caused by the influence of the patronymic (see below). No other source mentions the author of the *Patria of Anazarbus*. Stephanus of Byzantium cites an Ἀσκληπιάδης ὁ Ἀναζαρβεύς ("Asclepiades of Anazarbus") in his entry on Anazarbus, but the correction of **T1** prevents identifying him with the protagonist of the epigram (see below). Countless Asclepii populated the Greek world in antiquity: identifying one of them with our poet just because of the homonymy is not the best way to proceed.¹¹³⁶

Given the lack of information, the historical contextualization is very difficult. A small hint is provided by the name of Asclepius' father (Κωνσταντίνος), which denotes a late dating, from the mid-fourth century AD onwards (see below). The hypothesis is confirmed by the history of Anazarbus: taken by the Persian in the second half of the third century AD, the city returned to Roman control only at the beginning of the fourth century. The enthusiastic tones of the epigram, exalting the greatness of the "glorious Anazarbus" (Ἀναζαρβοῦ [...] κυδαλίστης) would have been quite out of context in a center controlled by the enemies of the empire. In the administrative reforms of Theodosius II, it was made the capital of *Cilicia Secunda* and hosted two ecclesiastical

¹¹³⁶ No inscription of Anazarbus mentions an Asclepius: cf. Sayar 2000.

councils (see below). All these elements make a dating between the fourth and the fifth centuries AD a reliable possibility.

Testimonia

1. AP IX 195

ΑΔΕΣΠΟΤΟΝ

εἰς τὰ πάτρια Ἀναζαρβοῦ.

Κωνσταντινιάδης Ἀσκληπιδὸς ἄστὺ γεραίρων
γράφεν Ἀναζαρβοῦ πάτρια κυδαλίμης.

2. εἰς τὰ πάτρια Ἀναζαρβοῦ : cum Jacobs | εἰστ÷ πάτρια ἀναζαρβου C || 3.
Ἀσκληπιδὸς : cum Brunck | ἀσκληπιιάδης P | Ἀσκληπιοῦ apogr. Buher. || 4.
Ἀναζαρβοῦ : cum A | ‘an τὰ Ἀνάζαρβα?’ apogr. Buher.

ANONYMOUS

To the *Patria of Anazarbus*.

Giving honor to the city, Asclepius, the son of Constantine,
wrote the *patria* of the glorious Anazarbus.

Commentary

T 1

Source date: tenth century AD.

ΑΔΕΣΠΟΤΟΝ: the anonymous epigram on the *Patria* of Anazarbus comes from the ninth book of the *Palatine Anthology*.¹¹³⁷ Under the generic definition of ἐπιγράμματα ἐπιδεικτικά (“epideictic epigrams”), this book collects 827 compositions. Technically speaking, just a few of them could be defined epideictic, the majority being of a composite nature.¹¹³⁸ The reasons for this editorial choice could be found in the textual transmission of the *Palatine Anthology*. The manuscript containing it – discovered by Saumaise in 1606 and actually divided between the libraries of Heidelberg (*Palatinus* 23) and Paris (*Parisinus Suppl. Gr.* 384) – is based on the anthology of the Byzantine scholar Constantine Cephalas, who collected epigrams between the second half of the ninth century AD and the first half of the tenth.¹¹³⁹ More than a single scribe worked on the codex, improving (and altering) the original structure of the model.¹¹⁴⁰ The ninth book, as it has arrived to us, is the result of this process. Analyzing the structure of it, Wifstrand concluded that the manuscript of Constantine copied by the scribes of the *Palatine* probably missed three or four *quaternia* between the epigrams IX 583 and 584.¹¹⁴¹ Gow hypothesized that these lost pages correspond to no less than 450 epigrams.¹¹⁴² In his opinion, they also included a title and a preface introducing a new section of the anthology, i.e. that of ekphrastic

¹¹³⁷ For a general introduction to the *Palatine Collection*, see Jeffreys 1991.

¹¹³⁸ Cf. Burgess 1902, 93, n. 1.

¹¹³⁹ Cf. Reitzenstein 1900, 1032.

¹¹⁴⁰ For the list of the scribes, see Lauxtermann 2007, 196–197. The epigram on Asclepius’ *Patria* was copied by the most ancient copyist, the so-called scribe A. For what concern the divergences between the collection of Constantine and the *Palatine* manuscript, see Lauxtermann 2007.

¹¹⁴¹ Cf. 1926, 66–86.

¹¹⁴² Cf. 1958, 53–56. A part of these epigrams can be found in the *Planudean* anthology: cf. Lauxtermann 1998, 526.

poems.¹¹⁴³ The theory would explain the differences between the epigrams up to IX 583 and those following it.¹¹⁴⁴ It must be noted, though, that the division of the ninth book does not explain the composite character of the (hypothetical) first part. As Lauxtermann wrote, the selection of the epigrams seems “essentially governed by the principle of negation: that is, anything not easily recognizable as erotic, sepulchral, etc., is classified under the general heading ‘epideictic’” (1998, 537). This could reveal an uncomfortable truth: “scholars [...] failed to find any common denominator for the simple reason that there is none” (1998, 532). Constantine grouped in book IX – or, at least, in the first part of it – all the texts he could not catalogue in a more specific way. He used the adjective ἐπίδεικτικός to define them, without being aware of its technical meaning.¹¹⁴⁵ These conclusions are confirmed by many of the epigrams, but not by that on Asclepius: since it presents and exalts the activity of the poet (see below), the adjective ἐπίδεικτικός suits it quite well. The composition is part of a series of texts dealing with books:¹¹⁴⁶ these poems introduce famous works – such as the *Ecclesiastical History* of Philostorgius¹¹⁴⁷ or the *Enchiridion* of Epictetus¹¹⁴⁸ – or celebrate their authors (see the famous presentation of Nonnus in IX 198). A part of them are headers of books, highlighting their topics and elements of interest.¹¹⁴⁹ In all probability, the epigram on the *Patria of Anazarbus* accomplished the same function. The lemma introducing it proves that (see below).

¹¹⁴³ Cf. 1958, 45–58. The hypothesis was supported by Aubreton–Buffière 1980, 34–41 and Lauxtermann 1998, 526–527. *Contra* Cameron 1993, 219–220.

¹¹⁴⁴ It is not by chance that a translator such as Paton defined the epigrams of book IX «declamatory and descriptive» (1917, 1).

¹¹⁴⁵ For a more detailed analysis, see Lauxtermann 1998. Dealing with the generic use of ἐπίδεικτικά in book IX, he suggested that Constantine borrowed the adjective either from Agathias’ *Cycle*, or from the *Palladas sylloge* (cf. 1998, 532–537).

¹¹⁴⁶ Cf. *AP* IX 184–210.

¹¹⁴⁷ Cf. IX 193.

¹¹⁴⁸ Cf. IX 207–208.

¹¹⁴⁹ Cf. IX 185 (introducing a collection of Archilocus’ poems), 186 (the comedies of Aristophanes), 190 (Erinna’s *Spindle*), 196 (Marinus’ *Life of Proclus*), 200–202 (Cyrimus’ *Book of Mechanics*), 205 (bucolic poems), 210 (Orbicius’ *Tactics*).

εἰς τὰ πάτρια Ἀναζαρβοῦ: the lemma has been added by one of the correctors of the Palatine manuscript, the so-called C. He corrected many passages of the codex, adding names of authors, ethnicity, and other information.¹¹⁵⁰ In this case, he confirms what the text of the epigram suggests, that is, its introductory function (see above). The plural neuter πάτρια is attested in another lemma of the *Anthology*, that of I 19 (cf. **n. 7, T1**). Placed on the bank of the river Pyramus (near the modern *Dilekkaya*), Anazarbus took its name ἀπὸ τοῦ προκειμένου ὄρους ἢ ἀπὸ Ἀναζάρβα τοῦ κτίσαντος, “either from the near mountain or from the founder Anazarba”.¹¹⁵¹ Named Καισάρεια πρὸς Ἀναζάρβῳ in the early imperial age, it regained the original name in late antiquity.¹¹⁵² Conquered by the Persians in 260 AD, Anazarbus returned to the empire at the beginning of the fourth century. In 408, Theodosius II made it capital of *Cilicia Secunda*. The city was the seat of two councils in 431 and 435.¹¹⁵³ Along with that of Asclepius, the sources attribute another *patria* of Anazarbus to the poet Claudianus (cf. **n. 7**).

Κωνσταντινιάδης Ἀσκληπιός: from a textual point of view, the mention of Asclepius is particularly interesting. The reading of the manuscript (Ἀσκληπιάδης) does not fit the meter of the line. Trying to maintain it, Reiske wrote: “nomina propria [...] vim a metro non patiuntur, sed afferunt. Pronunciandum tanquam si Σκληπιαδης esset scriptum” (1754, 215–216). To support his interpretation, the scholar noted that many ancient inscriptions adapted the reading of proper names to their own exigencies.¹¹⁵⁴ Then, he added: “Holstenius quoque ad Steph. Byz. v. Ἀναζάρβα carmen hoc edidit, unde Ἀσκληπιός, quod sive e codice manuscripto, sive ex Holstenii ingenio profectum sit, non displicet” (1754, 216). Reiske linked the correction Ἀσκληπιάδης > Ἀσκληπιός to Holstein’s commentary to Stephanus of Byzantium (1684). As already seen, one of the entries of the *Ethnica* concerns Anazarbus (see above). After providing information about the origin of the city and

¹¹⁵⁰ Cf. Gow–Page 1968, L–LI.

¹¹⁵¹ Cf. Steph. Byz. *Ethn.* s.v. Ἀνάζαρβα, α 301 Billerbeck.

¹¹⁵² The *Suda* reports other two names – Διοκαισάρεια (cf. δ 1154) and Κύνδα (cf. κ 2625) – but both of them are scarcely reliable: cf. Hirschfeld 1894, 2101.

¹¹⁵³ Cf. Sayar 1996, 675–676.

¹¹⁵⁴ Cf. 1754, 216.

its name, Stephanus notes: ἀφ’ ἧς ἦν Διοσκουρίδης ὁ διασημότατος ἰατρός, χρηματίζων Ἀναζαρβεύς, καὶ Ἀσκληπιάδης ὁ Ἀναζαρβεύς, ὁ πολλὰ τε καὶ ἄλλα καὶ περὶ ποταμῶν γράψας βιβλίον (“from there came the most distinct doctor Dioscorides – who was defined “of Anazarbus” – and Asclepiades of Anazarbus, who – along with many other things – wrote a book on rivers”).¹¹⁵⁵ In his commentary to the entry, Holstein provided the text of the epigram and identified its protagonist as Stephanus’ Ἀσκληπιάδης.¹¹⁵⁶ This is the passage mentioned by Reiske. In contrast to the scholar’s claim, Holstein did not say anything about the metrical problems of the line, nor did he try to correct them. It should not surprise us: Holstein’s identification of the two Asclepiades is based on their homonymy. Altering the name of one of them would dismantle the hypothesis. Since the correction Ἀσκληπιάδης > Ἀσκληπιὸς does not come from Holstein’s commentary, it must come from somewhere else: unfortunately, it is not possible to state from where. Brunck was the first editor to apply it,¹¹⁵⁷ and his example has been followed by the following scholars.¹¹⁵⁸ Whoever the creator was, there are good reasons to accept it. Reiske’s solution does not solve the metrical difficulties raised by the form Ἀσκληπιάδης; as the anonymous reviewer of the *Relationes de Libris Novis* already noted, the inscriptions quoted by the scholar were “plebejorum [...] & indoctorum”, while the poem from the *Anthology* “non ineruditum epigramma videtur” (1754, 159–160). Furthermore, the sequence of two patronymic suffixes such as Κωνσταντινιάδης and Ἀσκληπιαδης is suspicious: it is plausible – as Dübner summarized – that the latter is just a mistake “ex precedente voce [...] orto” (1888, 184).¹¹⁵⁹ As already said, accepting the correction Ἀσκληπιάδης >

¹¹⁵⁵ The edition of Asclepiades’ (scant) corpus is provided by Müller (*FHG* III 306). See also Schwarz 1896.

¹¹⁵⁶ Cf. 1684, 34.

¹¹⁵⁷ Cf. 1785, 278.

¹¹⁵⁸ Cf. Jacobs 1814, 66; Dübner 1888, 184; Stadtmüller 1906, 154; Waltz–Soury 1957, 78.

¹¹⁵⁹ A different solution is provided by the so-called *Apographus Codicis Buheriani* (whose name originates from the scholar Jean Bouhier): Κωνσταντινιάδης Ἀσκληπιοῦ, «Constantiniades, the son of Asclepius». Such a reading respects the metric of the line, but is not without problems: the form Κωνσταντινιάδης is not attested as a proper name (whereas Ἀσκληπιάδης is). Another hypothesis was made by Stadtmüller (1906, 154), who completely

Ἀσκληπιὸς impedes any connection with the mysterious author named by Stephanus of Byzantium: the author of the book *On Rivers* and that of the *Patria of Anazarbus* must be considered two different personalities. In the absence of any other chronological reference, a hint to date the latter is provided by the patronymic Κωνσταντινιάδης: as the *PLRE* highlights, it reveals a late date; in all probability, “not before the mid fourth century” (*PLRE* I, 116 [‘Asclepius 5’]).

ἄστν γεραίρων: the use of the verb γεραίρω (“to glorify, to celebrate”) reveals the celebratory aspect of Asclepius’ work. The following line confirms it (see below).

γράψεν Ἀναζαρβοῦ πάτρια κυδαλίμης: the second line of the epigram names the work of Asclepius; the title – likely inverted for metrical reason – is placed in the exact center of it. The line is divided in two well balanced *cola* (γράψεν Ἀναζαρβοῦ – πάτρια κυδαλίμης).

altered the disposition of the words: Γράψ’ Ἀσκληπιάδης Κωνσταντίνοιο γεραίρων <Θέσμι> Ἀναζαρβοῦ πάτρια κυδαλίμης («Asclepiades, the son of Constantine, wrote the traditional customs of the glorious Anazarbus»). The hypothesis was quite hazardous and the scholar was aware of that: indeed, he mentioned it only in the critic apparatus of his edition.

6.

CHRISTODORUS OF COPTUS

(*FHG* IV 360–361; *FGrHist* 283, 1084; *BNJ* 283, 1084)

Introduction

Like other authors of this collection, Christodorus of Coptus – the latest author of *patria* quoted by the sources – was born in Egypt. Flourishing under the reign of Anastasius (491–518 AD), he wrote a poem celebrating the Isaurian war of that emperor. Along with it, the *Suda* lists *patria* of Constantinople, Thessalonica, Nacle, Miletus, Tralles, and Aphrodisias, a *Description of the Statues of the Zeuxippus*, and ἄλλα πολλά, “many other things”. A different entry of the encyclopedia is dedicated to a Christodorus ἰλλούστριος: he is introduced as the author of a poem on fowling and a Christian composition on Cosmas and Damian. The two entries introduce a couple of individuals who share name, homeland, and profession: it is highly plausible that they refer to the same author (cf. **T1**).

Of Christodorus’ abundant production, only the *Description* is preserved: some of its verses are in the *Greek Anthology* (cf. **T5**). The hexameters allow us to analyze the style of the poet, highlighting the strong influence of Nonnus of Panopolis.¹¹⁶⁰

The celebration of Cosmas and Damian could indicate a Christian author, were it not for the testimony of John of Lydia, who cites a μονοβίβλιον (“a single book”) *On the Pupils of the Great Proclus*: the positive approach toward an enemy of Christianity such as the Neoplatonic Proclus complicates things (cf. **T3**). A scholium to Homer’s *Iliad* quotes some lines from a poem on Lydian history: it confirms, once again, Christodorus’ interest in local materials (or – more accurately – the interest of his public: cf. **T4**).

Among late antique authors of *patria*, Christodorus is the poet who wrote the highest number of them: the sources quote six poems,

¹¹⁶⁰ Cf. Tissoni 2000, 69–73.

against the four of Claudianus, and the three of Ulpian.¹¹⁶¹ Furthermore, he is the only author whose *patria* were divided into books: according to the *Suda*, the *Patria of Constantinople* included twelve books, that of Thessalonica twenty-five (cf. **T1**). If this division reveals a later re-working of the two composition, the absence of a public performance, or something else, is not clear. Normally, twenty-five books were too long for a single reading: if we hypothesize an integral public performance, we should suppose its division for different occasions (see below). Except for the Phoenician city of Nacle, the *patria* of Christodorus address cities of Asia Minor and its environs. This geographical focus reflects the political equilibriums of the sixth-century empire: Constantinople had been confirmed as the most important city of the eastern Mediterranean: the cities surrounding it took advantage of their proximity.

¹¹⁶¹ See, respectively, **n. 7** and **n. 12**.

Testimonia

1. Sud. χ 525 – 526

Χριστόδωρος, Πανίσκου, ἀπὸ Κοπτοῦ πόλεως τῆς Αἰγύπτου, ἐποποιός. ἠκμαζεν ἐπὶ τῶν Ἀναστασίου τοῦ βασιλέως χρόνων. ἔγραψεν Ἰσαυρικὰ ἐν βιβλίοις ἕξ· ἔχει δὲ τὴν Ἰσαυρίας ἄλωσιν τὴν ὑπὸ Ἀναστασίου τοῦ βασιλέως γενομένην· Πάτρια Κωνσταντινουπόλεως ἐπικῶς βιβλία ιβ', Πάτρια Θεσσαλονίκης ἐπικῶς βιβλία κε', Πάτρια Νάκλης· ἔστι δὲ πόλις περὶ Ἡλιούπολιν, ἐν ᾗ τὰ καλούμενα Ἀφακα· Πάτρια Μιλήτου τῆς Ἰωνίας, Πάτρια Τράλλεων, Πάτρια Ἀφροδισιάδος, Ἐκφρασιν τῶν ἐν τῷ Ζευξίππῳ ἀγαλμάτων· καὶ ἄλλα πολλά. Χριστόδωρος, Θηβαῖος, ἱλλούστριος. ἔγραψεν Ἰξευτικά δι' ἐπῶν· καὶ θαύματα τῶν ἀγίων Ἀναργύρων, Κοσμᾶ καὶ Δαμιανοῦ.

4. Πάτρια : A^rGFM | Π. δὲ S || 8. Ζευξίππῳ : codd. | -ου Daub || 10. Ἀναργύρων : A^rGFM | -ου S

Christodorus, son of Paniscus, from the Egyptian city of Coptus, epic poet. He flourished at the time of the emperor Anastasius. He wrote *Isaurica* in six books: it narrates the defeat of Isauria by the emperor Anastasius; *Patria of Constantinople*, in hexameters, twelve books; *Patria of Thessalonica*, in hexameters, twenty-five books; *Patria of Nacle* (it is a city in the hinterland of Heliopolis, where the so-called *Aphaca* is; *Patria of the Ionic Miletus*; *Patria of Tralles*; *Patria of Aphrodisias*; *Description of the Statues in the Zeuxippus*; and many other works. Christodorus, of Thebes, illustrious. He wrote *Ixeutica* in hexameters; furthermore, the *Wonders of the Unmercenary Saints Cosmas and Damian*.

2. Sud. ζ 37

Ζεύξιππος· ὅτι Χριστόδωρος, ἐποποιός, ἔγραψεν ἔκφρασιν ἀγαλμάτων τοῦ Ζευξίππου.

1. – 2. Ζεύξιππος – Ζευξίππου : AGITM | om. FV || 1. Χριστόδωρος : cum Basil | Χρηστόδωρος codd.

Zeuxippus: that the epic poet Christodorus wrote the *Description of the Statues in the Zeuxippus*.

3. John Lydus, *De Mag.* III 26

Ἀγάπιος ἦν κατ' ἐκεῖνον τὸν χρόνον, περὶ οὗ Χριστόδωρος ὁ ποιητὴς ἐν τῷ Περὶ τῶν Ἀκροατῶν τοῦ μεγάλου Πρόκλου μονοβίβλῳ <τ>έ φησιν οὕτως· “Ἀγάπιος πύματος μέν, ἀτὰρ πρώτιστος ἀπάντων”.

2. <τ>έ φησιν : cum Bandy | εφησὶν P | φησὶν P₂

Agapius lived in this time. In his work *On the Pupils of the Great Proclus* (one book), the poet Christodorus says so about him: “Agapius, assuredly last but first of all”.

4. Schol. A (= *Venet. gr.* 822) on Hom. *Il.* II 461 (II p. 280, 90–93 Erbse)

Ἄσιος υἱὸς Κότυος καὶ Μυιοῦς, Λυδῶν βασιλεύς, ὥς φησι Χριστόδωρος ἐν τοῖς Λυδιακοῖς· “Κότυς λευκώλενον ἄλλην / ἤγετο κουριδίην ὁμοδέμιον, οὖνομα Μυιοῦν· / ἡ δ' Ἄσιον τέκε κοῦρον”.

1. Μυιοῦς : cum Villoison | μιοῦς A || 3. Μυιοῦν : cum Villoison | μιὰν A || Ἄσιον : cum Müller | ἀσίην A

Asius, the son of Cotys and Myio, king of Lydia, as Christodorus says in the *Lydiaca*: “Cotys took another white-armed wife to share his bed: her name was Myio: she gave birth to the son Asius”.

5. *AP* II 1, p 1–5

ΧΡΙΣΤΟΔΩΡΟΥ

ποιητοῦ Θηβαίου Κοπτίτου

ΕΚΦΡΑΣΙΣ

τῶν ἀγαλμάτων τῶν εἰς τὸ δημόσιον γυμνάσιον

τοῦ ἐπικαλουμένου Ζευξίππου.

1. – 3. ΧΡΙΣΤΟΔΩΡΟΥ ποιητοῦ Θηβαίου Κοπτίτου ΕΚΦΡΑΣΙΣ : P | (ἐν τῷδε τῷ πέμπτῳ τμήματι περιέχεται) ἔκφρασις Χριστοδώρου ποιητοῦ Θηβαίου Κοπίτου Plan. || 5. τοῦ ἐπικαλουμένου Ζευξίππου : P | τὸν ἐπικαλούμενον Ζευξίππον Plan.

Christodorus,

the Theban poet of Coptus.

Description

of the statues of the public gymnasium

which is named Zeuxippus.

Commentary

T 1

Source date: tenth century AD.

Χριστόδωρος, Πανίσκου, ἀπὸ Κοπτοῦ πόλεως τῆς Αἰγύπτου, ἔποποιός: the name of Christodorus clearly reveals the Christian faith of his parents.¹¹⁶² Such a Christian background does not automatically imply that he was Christian too.¹¹⁶³ On the contrary, the writing of a work on Proclus' disciples could indicate pagan sympathies (cf. **T3**). The city of Coptus (the contemporary *Qift*) was an important trade center of upper Egypt. Officially placed in the *Thebais Secunda*, it was just a few kilometers distant from Thebes (the present-day Luxor): that could justify the reference of the *Suda* to a Χριστόδωρος Θηβαῖος (see below).¹¹⁶⁴ As regards the substantive ἔποποιός, it does not necessarily mean that Christodorus only wrote poetic works: the poet Pamprepus, who wrote both in verse and in prose (see below), is presented by the *Suda* as Παμπρέπιος, Πανοπολίτης, ἐπῶν ποιητής ("Pamprepus, of Panopolis, epic poet").¹¹⁶⁵

ἤκμαζεν ἐπὶ τῶν Ἀναστασίου τοῦ βασιλέως χρόνων: Christodorus' flourishing is dated to the reign of Anastasius I Dicorus (491–518 AD). Born circa 431 AD, the Illyrian soldier rose to the throne thanks to his marriage to Ariadne, the widow of the preceding ruler Zeno. Having defeated the revolt of the Isaurians (see below), he had to face other two uprisings: the former involved the people of Constantinople and originated from his Monophysite sympathies (512 AD); the latter was led by the Moesian mercenary Vitalianus (513–515 AD). Anastasius died childless in 518, leaving the finances of the empire in excellent

¹¹⁶² As Cameron noted, the pagan teophoric name of Christodorus' father Paniscus «tells us more about Christodorus' grandfather, than Christodorus himself» (2016, 350, n. 76).

¹¹⁶³ Cf. Cameron 2016, 6–7.

¹¹⁶⁴ Further information about Coptus in Traunecker 1992.

¹¹⁶⁵ Cf. *Sud.* π 136.

condition.¹¹⁶⁶ If Christodorus corresponds with the *vir inlustris* of *Sud.* χ 526, we cannot exclude that he got the title from Anastasius (see below).

ἔγραψεν Ἰσαυρικὰ ἐν βιβλίοις ἕξ· ἔχει δὲ τὴν Ἰσαυρίας ἄλωσιν τὴν ὑπὸ Ἀναστασίου τοῦ βασιλέως γενομένην: the first work listed by the *Suda* is a history of Anastasius' Isaurian war (492–498 AD). The death of Zeno deeply weakened the faction of Isaurian courtiers, particularly prosperous under the Isaurian emperor. Sent into exile by the new ruler Anastasius, Zeno's brother Flavius Longinus revolted against him in 492. The uprising was led in the following years by Longinus of Cardala, Athenodorus, and Longinus of Selinus. Between 497 and 498 the generals of Anastasius defeated the rebels and concluded the war.¹¹⁶⁷ As the *Suda* explains, Christodorus' work must be an epic celebrating τὴν Ἰσαυρίας ἄλωσιν, "the defeat of Isauria". A work with the same title and dealing with the same topic was written in the same years by the historian Capiton of Lycia.¹¹⁶⁸ Years before, under the reign of Zeno, other Ἰσαυρικὰ had been composed by the poet Pamprepus.¹¹⁶⁹ Of these three works, that of Christodorus was the only one in verse.

Πάτρια Κωνσταντινουπόλεως ἐπικῶς βιβλία ιβ': apart from the problematic *Patria of Constantinople* of Pseudo-Hesychius, that of Christodorus is the only attested composition dealing with the antiquities of the νέα Ῥώμη. Almost surely, other works did the same, but were lost: the reference of Stephanus of Byzantium to "those who wrote the *patria* of Byzantium" (οἱ τὰ πάτρια συγγεγραφότες τοῦ Βυζαντίου) attests to it.¹¹⁷⁰ Constantine's decision transformed a relatively marginal colony into the new center of the Roman east. Such a strong change needed to be canonized not only on a political level, but also on a cultural, social, and religious one. Narrating the origin of the city in a certain way could serve that purpose. The authors dealing with

¹¹⁶⁶ About the reign of Anastasius, see Charanis 1935; Capizzi 1969; Haarer 1998; Meier 2009; Arce-Feissel 2014.

¹¹⁶⁷ About the Isaurian war, see Capizzi 1969, 89–100; Meier 2009, 75–84.

¹¹⁶⁸ Cf. *FGrHist* 750 (= *BNJ* 750).

¹¹⁶⁹ Cf. *FGrHist* 749 (= *BNJ* 749).

¹¹⁷⁰ See the commentary to **n. 2, F1**.

the early history of Byzantium tried to find in it signs of future glory. Various tales were altered (or even created) to “Romanize” the city, to present it as an *altera Roma* from the beginning: hence the stories of its seven hills, of the seven *strategoi*, or of the *Palladium* buried under Constantine’s column.¹¹⁷¹ Interestingly enough, many of these elaborations were made in the first half of the sixth century, when Christodorus was still active: along with Pseudo-Hesychius’ text (the nucleus of which likely dates to the same period), we can quote the writings of John Lydus, John Malalas, and Cassiodorus. They all sought, in different ways, to reinforce the imperial prestige of Constantinople, often demeaning that of Rome.¹¹⁷² Christodorus’ *patria* could have aimed to do the same, namely to exalt the high status of Constantine’s foundation: a part of his material could have been used by other sources.¹¹⁷³ According to the *Suda*, the *Patria of Constantinople* were divided into twelve books. Such a division denotes quite a long work: too long, perhaps, to be performed in public like other *patria*. The same problem involves the *Patria of Thessalonica* (see below). To explain the situation, three possibilities are at our disposal: a) the text was directly written in twelve books and publicly performed in this way (perhaps in more than twelve days); b) it was written as a unitary work, read in public, then reworked and published in twelve books; or c) it was written directly for publication in twelve books. I would suggest that the second hypothesis is the most plausible, but the other two are possible as well.

Πάτρια Θεσσαλονίκης ἐπικῶς βιβλία κε’: being divided into twenty-five books, the *Patria of Thessalonica* is the longest work of Christodorus (at least, the longest we know of). As already said for the *Patria of Constantinople*, the division into books could have been present since the beginning, but could also be the result of a later intervention (see

¹¹⁷¹ Cf. Russell 2017, 210–222. For the seven hills of Constantinople, see Janin 1964, 4–7, 24, 43–58; about the seven *strategoi*, see Janin 1964, 11; as regards the *Palladium*, see Ando 2001, esp. 397–404.

¹¹⁷² My colleague Raf Praet (University of Groningen – Ghent University) is currently working on the topic.

¹¹⁷³ For instance, by the already seen passage of Stephanus of Byzantium: cf. **n. 2, F1**.

above). The prominence of Thessalonica in the late Roman empire is mainly due to its strategic position: placed along the *Via Egnatia*, the city provided excellent headquarters to face the barbarian threats from the Danube. At the same time, thanks to its connection with Asia Minor, it allowed a fast transfer to the eastern border.¹¹⁷⁴ For this reason, the city was chosen by Galerius and (for a while) by Constantine as an imperial seat. The former, in particular, enriched it with many monuments and public buildings. From the mid-fifth century AD, Thessalonica was designated as the capital of the prefecture of Illyricum, intensifying its relations with Constantinople. The new position increased the prosperity of a rich city, which had already been spared by the Germanic invasions.¹¹⁷⁵ In this context, the redaction of the *patria* is not surprising.

Πάτρια Νάκλης: ἔστι δὲ πόλις περὶ Ἡλίουπολιν, ἐν ᾗ τὰ καλούμενα Ἄφακα: the ancient Nacle corresponds to the present-day Lebanese city of *Nakhle*.¹¹⁷⁶ The identification of it must have been taxing already in the time of the Sudaist: indeed, he felt necessary to explain which city Christodorus had celebrated with his *patria*. As the entry says, Nacle was near the Syrian Heliopolis:¹¹⁷⁷ the “so-called Aphaka” was in its territory. The encyclopedia makes reference here to a site of the mount Libanus, the contemporary *Afkah*: in ancient times, it was the seat of the most important shrine of Astarte.¹¹⁷⁸ It is not possible to state if the information came from Christodorus’ text. For sure, a reference to the sanctuary and its origin would have been not out of context. Along with Astarte (= the Greek Aphrodite), the sanctuary hosted also the cult of Adonis.¹¹⁷⁹ The love story of the youth with the goddess of beauty was a popular subject in ancient poetry: it could have been approached by our poet as well. Those of Nacle are the only *patria* dedicated by Christodorus to a city outside of Asia Minor.¹¹⁸⁰ It would be tempting to

¹¹⁷⁴ About the geographical position of Thessalonica, cf. Spieser 1984, 7–24.

¹¹⁷⁵ Cf. Gregory 1991, 2071.

¹¹⁷⁶ See *BA*, Map 69 D1.

¹¹⁷⁷ See the commentary to **n. 12, T2**.

¹¹⁷⁸ Cf. James 1966, 18.

¹¹⁷⁹ Cf. Ciccolella 2000, 186–187; Amato 2010.

¹¹⁸⁰ At least, the only attested by sources.

date them to the early phase of his career, when he moved from Egypt to Constantinople: using the overland route, he must have passed through Phoenicia; in doing so, he could have reached Nacle and addressed it with a poem. Yet, no element is available to contextualize the Πάτρια Νάκλης properly. Furthermore, we must keep in mind that a poet did not necessarily need to visit a place to dedicate a work to it. The *Suda* reports the same description of Nacle in the entry dedicated to the city.¹¹⁸¹ Another entry is assigned to the Ἄφακα.¹¹⁸² In both cases, the encyclopedia refers to the entry of Christodorus.¹¹⁸³

Πάτρια Μιλήτου τῆς Ἰωνίας: placed near the mouth of the Meander river, Miletus (the present-day *Balat*) was one of the most prestigious cities of the ancient world. Hailed by Herodotus as the “ornament of Ionia” (τῆς Ἰωνίης [...] πρόσχημα),¹¹⁸⁴ the *Ioniae caput* maintained a high profile almost continuously from the archaic age through the imperial one.¹¹⁸⁵ For late antiquity, excavations demonstrate that the city was affected – like the rest of the empire – by the so-called crisis of the third century, but started flourishing again under the reign of Diocletian. Even so, it never again reached its former wealth: between the fourth and the fifth centuries AD, it maintained quite a modest profile.¹¹⁸⁶ The first decades of Justinian’s reign (527–565) saw a spate of public works instead, mostly due to the influence of Hesychius, the most powerful Milesian at the court of Constantinople.¹¹⁸⁷ An inscription of 538 AD celebrates the transformation of the market gate into a city gate: the change reveals how reduced the size of Miletus was compared to the past.¹¹⁸⁸ In spite of that, its prestige endured: in the same century, Stephanus of Byzantium still defined it as a πόλις ἐπιφανής

¹¹⁸¹ Cf. v 18.

¹¹⁸² Cf. α 4548.

¹¹⁸³ Cf. v 18: ζήτει περὶ τούτου καὶ ἐν τῷ χ εἰς τὸ Χριστόδωρος («the topic is treated also in χ under Christodorus»); α 4548: ζήτει ἐν τῷ Χριστόδωρος («is treated in the entry on Christodorus»).

¹¹⁸⁴ Cf. V 28.

¹¹⁸⁵ The Latin definition is of Pliny the Elder (*NH* V 112). For a summary of the long and intense history of Miletus, see Cobet–von Graeve–Starke 2000.

¹¹⁸⁶ Cf. Foss 1977, 477.

¹¹⁸⁷ About Hesychius, see the general introduction (§ 4).

¹¹⁸⁸ Cf. Cobet–von Graeve–Starke 2000.

(“remarkable / renowned city”).¹¹⁸⁹ Nothing excludes that Christodorus’ *patria* was written in this phase of Milesian history: the poet flourished under Anastasius’ reign, which is separated from Justinian’s by only nine years.

Πάτρια Τράλλεων: the Lydian city of Tralles (the present-day *Aydın*) was famous in late antiquity for its production of cushions and its enormous aqueduct. Destroyed by an earthquake in 26 BC, it was rebuilt with the help of Augustus: as a sign of gratitude, the citizens declared the *princeps* the new founder of their city and rebaptized it Caesarea. The new name stopped being used before the end of the first century AD.¹¹⁹⁰ The episode of the Augustan restoration is particularly interesting for our analysis, because it finds a place in Agathias’ *Histories*.¹¹⁹¹ According to the historian, the citizen of Tralles Chaeremon sent an embassy to Augustus and convinced the ruler to help his people. Having narrated that, Agathias notes: ταῦτα δὲ οὕτω ξυνενεχθῆναι δηλοῖ μὲν πού καὶ ἡ πάτριος τοῦ ἄστεος ἱστορία, οὐχ ἥκιστα δὲ τούτίγραμμα, ὅπερ ἔγωγε ἐκεῖσε ἐλθὼν ἀνελεξάμην (“that these things happened in this way is confirmed by the local history of the city; along with that, by an epigram which I in person have read when I went there”).¹¹⁹² As it is possible to see, the historian quotes a πάτριος τοῦ ἄστεος ἱστορία as one of his sources. McCail interpreted the passage as a reference to the *patria* of Tralles.¹¹⁹³ Going further, Cameron identified the ἱστορία “surely with Christodorus’ *patria*” (2016, 271). The hypothesis is not impossible: yet, a couple of remarks are necessary. On the one hand, nothing precludes that Agathias read a different kind of local history: just to offer an example, the *Suda* attributes a work *Περὶ Τράλλεων* to Apollonius of Aphrodisias.¹¹⁹⁴ Agathias could have read

¹¹⁸⁹ Cf. Ethn. s.v. Μίλητος (μ 184 Billerbeck).

¹¹⁹⁰ For an introduction to the city, its history and archeological remaining, see Bean 1971, 208–211.

¹¹⁹¹ Cf. *Hist.* II 17 (62–64). For a deep analysis of the passage, see Jones 2011. About Agathias’ *Histories*, see Frendo 1975, I–XIII.

¹¹⁹² Cf. *Hist.* II 17 (63, 17–19).

¹¹⁹³ Cf. 1967, 245.

¹¹⁹⁴ Cf. α 3424 (*FGrHist* 740, T1 = *BNJ* 740, T1). The work on Tralles could have been a part of Apollonius’ *Carian History* (Καρικὰ): cf. *BNJ* 740, F1. This possibility does not create problems to my point.

this text, instead of Christodorus'. On the other hand, if the historian used *patria* of Tralles, nothing guarantees that they were those of Christodorus: no source mentions other *Patria of Tralles*, but this does not mean that they did not exist. In spite of these difficulties, it must be noted that Augustus' reconstruction of Tralles could have easily been inserted into the *patria* of the city: as already said, the ruler was proclaimed its new founder. Furthermore, evoking Augustus' role in the (re-)foundation of Tralles was a good way to highlight the bond of the Lydian city with the Roman world.

Πάτρια Ἀφροδισιάδος: having developed from a settlement around the sanctuary of Aphrodite, Aphrodisias (the present-day *Geyre*) first achieved prosperity in the first century BC. The archeological testimonies show that the city maintained its high status until the third century AD, when the imperial crisis on the one hand and the reforms of Diocletian on the other respectively reduced its wealth and autonomy. The inscriptions reveal that the fourth century was difficult from an economic point of view: the city must have faced a sharp decline from its earlier status. The situation drastically changed in the mid fifth century: the upswing of public renovation displays a new phase of growth, which lasted up until the first half of the sixth century.¹¹⁹⁵ The redaction of Christodorus' *patria* takes place in this fortunate period: like the public buildings built or restored by wealthy benefactors, the poem aimed to celebrate the regained prosperity of Aphrodisias. Introducing the Carian city, Stephanus of Byzantium says that it was founded by the Leleges, the primeval population of the Aegean coast: for this reason, he notes, its first name was *Λελέγων Πόλις*, the "City of Leleges". The city changed its name three other times, becoming in succession *Μεγαλόπολις*, *Νινώη* (from the Assyrian ruler Ninus), and *Ἀφροδισιάς*.¹¹⁹⁶ We cannot say if Christodorus included these steps in his work: however, we can reasonably suspect that – whatever story he narrated – the poet exalted the connection between Aphrodisias and the tutelary deity Aphrodite.

¹¹⁹⁵ About the history and development of Aphrodisias, see Roueché 1989, XXII–XXVII.

¹¹⁹⁶ Cf. *Ethn.* s.v. *Νινώη* (v 62 Billerbeck).

Ἐκφρασιν τῶν ἐν τῷ Ζευξίπῳ ἀγαλμάτων: the *Description* is the only major work of Christodorus to survive. It is preserved by the *Greek Anthology* (cf. T5).

καὶ ἄλλα πολλά: the *Suda* closes the entry on Christodorus with the usual reference to “many other works”. We can identify some of these unspecified compositions. John of Lydia quotes a line from a poem on Proclus’ disciples (cf. T3). A scholium on the *Iliad* uses a local history of Lydia as a source (cf. T4). Along with these texts, we should also consider the two compositions listed by *Sud.* χ 526 and attributed to the Theban Christodorus: the poem on fowling for one, and the Christian *Miracles of Cosmas and Damian, the Unmercenary Saints* for the second (see below). The strong encomiastic focus of Christodorus’ poetry made Viljamaa attribute one of the fragmentary texts of *P. Gr. Vindob.* 29788 A–C to his hand.¹¹⁹⁷ The papyrus codex contains the remains of four hexametric compositions: 1. an encomium to an unspecified emperor; 2. the conclusion of another poem, comparing the nameless addressee to Apollo; 3. the ekphrasis of a day; 4. the encomium of the patrician Theogenes. Along with these poems, the codex preserves some fragments of Gregory of Nazianzus’ letters 80 and 90.¹¹⁹⁸ Attributed by their first editor Gerstinger to Pamprepus, the fragments of the papyrus have been extensively studied by scholars. The majority of them disagreed with Gerstinger’s attribution, noting that the literary quality of the third poem is far higher than that of the other three: it supposedly reveals a different authorship.¹¹⁹⁹ When dealing with the first fragment of the corpus, Viljamaa found some similarities between it and Priscian’s and Procopius’ encomia on Anastasius. On that basis, he referred the

¹¹⁹⁷ Cf. 1968, 55–57; 101–104.

¹¹⁹⁸ For an essential introduction to the papyrus codex, see Miguélez–Cavero 2014, 72–74. For the critical edition of its fragments, see Heitsch 1963, 108–120 and Livrea 1979.

¹¹⁹⁹ Cf. Gerstinger 1928, 20–24. See the objections of Graindor (1929, 469), Maas (1929, 250), Schissel (1929, 1079), Körte (1932, 25), Keydell (1929–1930, 290; 1930, 123), Viljamaa (1968, 55–57), and McCall (1978, 38–40). Explaining the stylistic differences of the poems as a consequence of their different genres, Livrea (1977, 121–123) attributed the compositions 2–4 to Pamprepus. In a similar way, Cameron (1982, 236–237, n. 82) considered the poet the author of the last two poems.

anonymous text to the same emperor, considering it a work of Christodorus: in his interpretation, the poem should allude to the Isaurian war of Anastasius (see above) and to the following Persian conflict (502–506 AD).¹²⁰⁰ Viljamaa's hypothesis allows room for some criticisms: McCall listed them in his analysis of the text.¹²⁰¹ As the scholar convincingly concluded, the anonymous encomium better fits the action of the emperor Zeno (474–491 AD) rather than that of his successor.¹²⁰² Such a conclusion makes the attribution to Christodorus quite hard to sustain. Along with the *Ekphrasis*, the *Palatine Anthology* includes two other epigrams of Christodorus: supposedly written after 517, they mourn the death of John of Epidamnus, consul and prefect of Illyricum.¹²⁰³ As Tissoni pointed out, it is quite difficult to believe that a poet such as Christodorus wrote only two epigrams in all his life.¹²⁰⁴ This remark allows us to introduce the testimony of Pseudo-Eudocia's *Violarium*. The text reproduces *Sud.* χ 525 and χ 526, but partially alters them: the works of Christodorus are filed in a different order; three books of epigrams and four of letters are added to the list.¹²⁰⁵ Formerly attributed to the empress Eudocia Macrembolitissa (1021–1096 AD), the *Violarium* is a literary forgery of the Cretan copyist Constantine Paleokappa (XVI c.): the reference to Christodorus' letters and epigrams is due to him.¹²⁰⁶ In spite of its theoretical reliability (or because of it!), it must not be taken into account.

Χριστόδωρος, Θηβαῖος, ἰλλούστριος: having introduced Christodorus of Coptus, the *Suda* dedicates a different entry to a namesake of Thebes. His identification with the epic poet is based on three points: first, the homonymy; second, the geographic origin; third, the poetic activity. If the first element does not require any explanation, some remarks are

¹²⁰⁰ Cf. 1968, *loc. cit.* For further information about Anastasius' Persian war, see Capizzi 1969, 174–187; Meier 2009, 174–222.

¹²⁰¹ Cf. 1978, 39.

¹²⁰² Cf. 1978, 40.

¹²⁰³ Cf. *AP* VII 697–698. For the analysis of the two texts, see Tissoni 2000, 24–36.

¹²⁰⁴ Cf. 2000, 19.

¹²⁰⁵ Cf. *Viol.* MX–MXI (5–6): ἐπιγραμμάτων βιβλία γ', ἐπιστολῶν δ'.

¹²⁰⁶ Cf. Dorandi 2009, 194. Further information about the activity of the forger in García Bueno 2013.

necessary for the second. The adjective Θηβαῖος (“Theban”) could refer to two different Thebes, i.e. the Egyptian and the Greek: as already said, the former gave its name to a Roman province and was not too distant from Coptus (see above). As a citizen of Coptus, Christodorus could have easily been linked to the main center of his province (above all, while living out of Egypt). But there is more. While dealing with Christodorus’ ekphrasis, the lemmatist of the *Palatine Anthology* speaks of a “Theban poet of Coptus” (cf. **T5**). He puts Thebes and Coptus together: that likely reveals the existence of a tradition linking Christodorus to the two cities. The same tradition could be behind the quote of the *Suda*: whereas the *Anthology* preserved it, the encyclopedia altered it, referring Thebes and Coptus to two separate persons. One could object that a different process is possible as well: that the lemmatist of the *Anthology* read the two entries of the *Suda* and merged their contents. Such an interpretation is disputable: it implies that the lemmatist read the *Suda*, which is quite hazardous to hypothesize.¹²⁰⁷ It is easier to suppose that his knowledge of Christodorus came from his manuscript of the *Description*. That confirms the presence of an earlier tradition involving the origin of the Egyptian poet.¹²⁰⁸ If that is the case, we should try to determine from where Christodorus’ link with Thebes have arisen. As already said, everything could be due to a geographical simplification. The Egyptian city was the most important center near Coptus: it would have been easy for a poet working abroad to mention it as his own homeland. Otherwise, we could simply think it a mistake. As an alternative, one could hypothesize that Christodorus effectively spent a part of his life in Thebes: the *Suda* often links people to their working places.¹²⁰⁹ There is even a fourth possibility: that the Θηβαῖος of the entry does not refer to the city of Thebes, but to its region instead. If so, the *Suda* would define Christodorus a Theban not because he was a citizen of Thebes, but as an inhabitant of the Thebaid. So much for the second element of identification. For the third, the poetic activity of the

¹²⁰⁷ The contrary idea – that the Sudaist read the *Anthology* – is not plausible at all: why should the former separate the two ethnics of Christodorus, if his source presented them together?

¹²⁰⁸ The situation is complicated by its dubious chronology. See the commentary to **T5**.

¹²⁰⁹ See, for instance, the commentary to **n. 12, TT 1–2**.

second Christodorus is confirmed by the reference to the *Ixeutika* (see below). If we use these three points to identify the namesakes of χ 525 and χ 526, we must examine why the *Suda* separated them, and how it did it. The separation must have been made either by the Sudaist himself, or by his source.¹²¹⁰ There are not enough elements to allow further analysis. As regards the reasons for the split, Tissoni suggested that whoever made it wanted to separate Christodorus' Christian works from the others.¹²¹¹ The mention of a text on the saints Cosmas and Damian would confirm the hypothesis, were it not for the secular *Ixeutika* (see below). A different division could be suggested by Christodorus' title: χ 526 speaks indeed of a *vir inlustris* (ἰλλούστριος).¹²¹² The two works listed by the entry could be those written after the poet achieved the position. Since, however, we do not know when it happened, which emperor honored Christodorus with the title, and the reasons for his action, such a hypothesis cannot be confirmed.¹²¹³ Nothing impedes a less teleological interpretation, namely that the Sudaist (or his source) found Christodorus' works alternatively attributed to Χριστόδωρος Κοπτίτης and Χριστόδωρος Θηβαῖος and collected them in two different entries.

ἔγραψεν Ἰξευτικά δι' ἐπῶν: the *Ixeutika* was a hexametric poem dealing with fowling. The *Suda* attributes a work with the same title to Oppian, but the reference is quite problematic.¹²¹⁴

καὶ θαύματα τῶν ἁγίων Ἀναργύρων, Κοσμά καὶ Δαμιανοῦ: the second work listed in the entry concerns the miracles of saints Cosmas and Damian. Martyred in Syria during the Great Persecution (303–313

¹²¹⁰ Adler refers Christodorus' entries to Hesychius: cf. 1935, 827.

¹²¹¹ Cf. 2000, 18–19.

¹²¹² About the title, see Berger 1915.

¹²¹³ Christodorus could have obtained it because of his poetic merits (maybe from the emperor Anastasius? If so, why did the Sudaist not mention the emperor in χ 526 instead of χ 525?). Nothing impedes that he received it for other reasons. For what we know, he could also have inherited it from his family.

¹²¹⁴ Cf. *Sud.* ο 452. The encyclopedia mixes two poets with the same name: the author of *Halieutica* on the one hand, that of *Cynegetica* on the other. For what concerns the poem on fowling, it is lost: cf. Drury 1985, 862.

AD), the two brothers practiced medicine without accepting any payment: hence the title of *Ἀνάργυροι*, “unmercenaries”.¹²¹⁵ Anastasius must have been particularly devoted to them: he dedicated a church to their cult in his own city Epidamnus.¹²¹⁶ Having celebrated the military victories of the emperor, Christodorus could well have written a work glorifying “his” saints. For the presence of a Christian text in the corpus of the poet, see the commentary to **T3**.

T 2

Source date: tenth century AD.

Ζεύξιππος· ὅτι Χριστόδωρος, ἐποποιός, ἔγραψεν ἔκφρασιν ἀγαλμάτων τοῦ Ζευξίππου: about Christodorus' *Description*, see the commentary to **T5**.

T 3

Source date: sixth century AD.

Ἀγάπιος ἦν κατ' ἐκεῖνον τὸν χρόνον: Christodorus' quote comes from John of Lydia's *On the Magistrates of the Roman Empire*.¹²¹⁷ From III 22 to III 30, the treatise describes the office of the *cornicularius*, i.e. the senior assistant of provincial governments and prefects.¹²¹⁸ Having held that office, John of Lydia denounces its scant profit.¹²¹⁹ The complaint introduces an autobiographic section, where the author summarizes his past career.¹²²⁰ He evokes his arrival in Constantinople and his decision to study philosophy, naming his teacher Agapius.¹²²¹ At

¹²¹⁵ For a general perspective on the two saints and their cult, see Wittmann 1967.

¹²¹⁶ Cf. Capizzi 1969, 206; Tissoni 2000, 25.

¹²¹⁷ Cf. III 26 (= *FGrHist* 283, 1084, F2; *BNJ* 283, 1084, F2).

¹²¹⁸ Cf. Barnish 1992, 158, n. 17.

¹²¹⁹ Cf. Stein 1949, 28–29; Bandy 1982, XXII–XXIII; Kelly 2004, 13.

¹²²⁰ Cf. *De Mag.* III 26–30.

¹²²¹ The city where Agapius had his chair is disputed: see Dubuisson-Schamp 2006, XXV–XXVII.

this point the quote of Christodorus occurs. Having cited the line of the Egyptian poet (see below), John concludes: παρ' ᾧ, τὰ πρῶτα τῶν Ἀριστοτελικῶν διδαγμάτων ἐπιών, ἔτυχον καί τινων ἐκ τῆς Πλατωνικῆς φιλοσοφίας ἀκροάσασθαι (“under him, I went through the rudiments of Aristotelian teachings and had the opportunity of studying some elements of Platonic philosophy”). We do not have much information about Agapius. The *Suda* says that he was a notable Neoplatonist when Marinus was the head of the Platonic Academy: that dates his activity to the late fifth century AD.¹²²² Further elements are provided by the fragments of Damascius’ *Life of Isidore*: he was a pagan Athenian, particularly versed in literary criticism.¹²²³

περὶ οὗ Χριστόδωρος ὁ ποιητῆς ἐν τῷ Περὶ τῶν Ἀκροατῶν τοῦ μεγάλου Πρόκλου μονοβίβλῳ <τ>έ φησιν οὕτως: as already stated, Christodorus’ book about the disciples of Proclus supposedly reveals his pagan sympathies. One could note that personal faith and public activity do not necessarily go together (especially in late antiquity), but this objection would not be convincing in our case. A Christian author could have easily used pagan myths to celebrate the deeds of his protector, or the antiquity of his community: but writing the biographies of pagan philosophers, who had been disciples of an anti-Christian icon such as Proclus, was something else. As the *Suda* attests, the head of the Neoplatonic school wrote an *Arguments against the Christians* (Ἐπιχειρήματα κατὰ Χριστιανῶν) in eighteen books.¹²²⁴ The work has not survived, but the response of John Philoponus gives an idea of its structure.¹²²⁵ The same criticism of Christian doctrines is also evident in

¹²²² Cf. *Sud.* α 157; *PLRE* II, 32–33 (‘Agapius 3’). For an introduction to Marinus of Neapolis, see Saffrey 2005. See also Watts 2002, 186–207.

¹²²³ Cf. *Ep.* 331; *FF* 276; 277; 284; 328. Critical edition in Athanassiadi 1999. For an analysis of the passages concerning Agapius, see Dubuisson–Schamp 2006, XXI–XXV.

¹²²⁴ Cf. π 2473. It is likely that the number 18 originally indicated the arguments provided by Proclus, not the books of his work: cf. Barnes 2013, 179. For an introduction to Proclus and his wide production, see Saffrey 2001.

¹²²⁵ For a critical text of John’s *De aeternitate mundi contra Proclum*, see Rabe 1899 and Scholten 2009. See also the translation of Share 2005a, 2005b, 2010 and Wilberding 2006.

other works.¹²²⁶ A strong pagan approach was at the base of Proclus' teachings: he used to teach his pupils Orphic and Chaldaic doctrines, performing religious rituals with them on a regular basis.¹²²⁷ The philosopher was forced to leave Athens for this reason: coming back after one year, he could avoid further problems only thanks to his powerful protectors.¹²²⁸ The pagan approach of Proclus was maintained by his pupils (at least, by those who remained in Athens): as the sources witness, Marinus, Zenodotus, Hegias, and Damascius kept teaching "paganizing" doctrines, although in different ways.¹²²⁹ Christodorus' esteem for Proclus is revealed by the title of his μονοβίβλιον: the Neoplatonist is eloquently named "the great" (τοῦ μεγάλου Πρόκλου). That a Christian poet could praise a philosopher "who had moved his abominable and insolent tongue against Christians" (κατὰ Χριστιανῶν τὴν μιὰρὰν καὶ ἐφύβριστον αὐτοῦ γλῶσσαν κινήσας) is quite difficult to imagine.¹²³⁰ While writing his poem, Christodorus must have been pagan (or, at least, not Christian).¹²³¹ A confirmation of that also comes from the praise of Agapius (see below). Trying to save Christodorus' Christianity, one could attribute the celebration of Proclus to the customer of the poem: he was a supporter of the Neoplatonic school and asked Christodorus to write the μονοβίβλιον, regardless of his religious beliefs. Yet, the poet accepted the commission: it denotes an aloof Christian faith, if not a completely absent one. Trying to determine the religious profile of an individual is always a risky attempt: still, the orthodoxy of a Communist celebrating the deeds of Margaret Thatcher must raise some doubts. A low religious profile would explain Proclus' poem on the one hand, and the praise of Cosmas and Damian on the other: a poet separating work and private life could easily have written the former text as a Christian, and the latter as a pagan. As an

¹²²⁶ See, for instance, what Lamberton 2016 writes about his commentary to Plato's *Republic*.

¹²²⁷ Cf. Watts 2002, 165–170.

¹²²⁸ Cf. Watts 2002, 171–180.

¹²²⁹ Cf. Watts 2002, 199–227.

¹²³⁰ Cf. *Sud. loc. cit.*

¹²³¹ *Contra* Cameron, who suggested that Christodorus' work was «a different sort of *Patria*» (2016, 350, n. 76). Such a hypothesis is not plausible at all. Less problematic is Cameron's idea that Christodorus wrote the text on Proclus' disciples in Athens (cf. 2016, 6–7).

alternative, we could hypothesize Christodorus' conversion to Christianity, maybe favored by the poet's rising in society (see above). A similar route had been followed, decades before, by the philosopher Horapollon.¹²³² Whatever Christodorus' private beliefs, the addressee of his work on Proclus' pupils must have been of Neoplatonic sympathies. That said, we can add a final consideration. If we follow the testimony of the *Suda* and date the poem to the reign of Anastasius, an interesting aspect emerges. After the death of Proclus (480 AD), his school was upset by internal divisions: one of his last disciples – Plutarch's great-great-grand-son Hegias – tried to take control over the school to the detriment of Marinus and his followers. The conflict finished only at the end of the century, when Hegias prevailed and became the new scholarch of the Academy.¹²³³ If Christodorus' poem was written in these difficult years, nothing precludes that it took a position in the strife.

“Ἀγάπιος πύματος μέν, ἀτὰρ πρῶτιστος ἀπάντων”: Christodorus' line is based on the contrast between the late entrance of Agapius into the circle of Proclus and the high standing he enjoyed there. That an open pagan such as Agapius was exalted in this way supports the hypothesis of a pagan poet (or of a pagan customer: see above). The quote of a hexameter confirms that Christodorus' biographies were in poetry. One cannot say much regarding the structure of the *μονοβιβλίον*. Radicke plausibly suggested that the work “contained short sketches of the life of each disciple” of Proclus. Christodorus could have found a model for his work in Marinus' lost *Life of Proclus*.¹²³⁴

T 4

Source date: tenth century AD.

¹²³² See n. 10, T1.

¹²³³ Cf. Watts 2002, 189–207.

¹²³⁴ Cf. *BNJ* 1080, Introduction. As the scholar highlights, another example of poetic biography is provided by Soterichus of Oasis' *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*: cf. n. 11, T1. About Marinus' text and – more in general – the Neoplatonist biographies, see Blumenthal 1984. Interestingly, Tissoni found similarities even between Marinus' biography and Christodorus' *Ekphrasis*: cf. 2000, 37–44.

Ἄσιος υἱὸς Κότυος καὶ Μυιοῦς, Λυδῶν βασιλεύς: the marginal scholium naming Christodorus comes from the tenth-century codex *Venetus graecus* 822.¹²³⁵ It explains the Doric genitive Ἀσίῳ (“of Asius”), used by Homer in the second book of the *Iliad*.¹²³⁶ The poet describes the Achaean army by comparing it with a flock of birds: those birds, he says, fly here and there Ἀσίῳ ἐν λειμῶνι Καῦστρίου ἀμφὶ ῥέεθρα, “in the meadow of Asius, along the stream of Cayster”. The reference to the river Cayster – flowing from Mount Tmolus to the shores of the Aegean Sea – reveals the Lydian background of the simile. The context is confirmed by the mention of the Lydian king Asius. The son of Cotys and his wife Myio is named only by erudite sources, which are mainly interested in the etymological value of his name: as Stephanus of Byzantium notes, some think that the substantive Ἀσία originates ἀπὸ Ἀσίου τοῦ Λυδοῦ (“from the Lydian Asius”).¹²³⁷ As it is possible to see, the scholium inserts the king into the genealogy of the sovereigns of Lydia: in doing so, it uses Christodorus as a source (see below). No other text involving Lydian genealogies does this.¹²³⁸ Another scholium of the *Venetus graecus* 822 refers to the same line: ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἀσίου τοῦ Κότυος βασιλέως Λυδίας. Κάϋστρος υἱὸς Πενθεσιλείας τῆς Ἀμαζόνος, ὃς ἐν Ἀσκάλῳ ἐγῆμεν τὴν Δερκετὼ καὶ ἐξ αὐτῆς ἔσχεν τὴν Σεμίραμιν. | ἡ δὲ Δερκετὼ παρὰ Σύροις καλεῖται Ἀταργατῖς (“from Asius, the son of Cotys. Cayster, the son of the Amazon Penthesilea: he marries Derceto in Ascalon and had Semiramis from her. | The Syrians call Derceto Atargatis”). The source of this information, according to van der Valk, must be Porphyry’s Homeric commentary.¹²³⁹

ὥς φησι Χριστόδωρος ἐν τοῖς Λυδιακοῖς: as the textual quotation reveals (see below), the *Lydiaka* of Christodorus was a hexametric

¹²³⁵ Earlier *Marcianus graecus* 454: for a description of it, see Erbse 1969, XIII–XVI.

¹²³⁶ Cf. II 461.

¹²³⁷ Cf. *Ethn.* s.v. Ἀσία (α 474 Billerbeck). Other mentions of the Lydian kings are in Aelius Herodianus (3,1 164, 25 Lentz), in [Zonaras] (*Lex.* α 318, 7), in the *Schol. Apoll. Rhod.* (B 777), etc.

¹²³⁸ Cf. Tissoni 2000, 18.

¹²³⁹ Cf. 1963, 65. About Porphyry’s Homeric Questions, see the edition of Schlunk 1993.

poem on the history of Lydia.¹²⁴⁰ The choice of the poetic form is the main difference between this work and the *Lydiaka* written before it.¹²⁴¹ It reflects a general tendency of late antique literature. As Cameron has noted, one of the main features of it is the revival of poetry after the “low point” of the first and the second centuries AD.¹²⁴² The scholar points out that “poetry actually expanded its field, colonizing areas previously dominated by prose” (2016, 164): the composition of poetic encomia is a good example of the tendency. The same could be said for Christodorus’ poetic local history.¹²⁴³

“Κότυς λευκώλενον ἄλλην / ἤγετο κουριδίην ὁμοδέμνιον, οὖνομα Μυιοῦν· / ἢ δ’ Ἄσιον τέκε κοῦρον”: the quote of the scholium likely comes from a list of Lydian kings. This section of the *Lydiaka* must not be too distant from the *Ekphrasis* of the Zeuxippus (cf. **T5**): in all probability, Christodorus made a list of the different sovereigns, providing some information for each of them. In this case, the poet introduces Cotys’ marriage with the “white-armed” Myio and the birth of his son Asius. As already seen, the mention of the royal baby is the reason of Christodorus’ quote. The fragment is too scant to allow a proper poetic evaluation, but a better view is offered by the *Ekphrasis* (see below).¹²⁴⁴

¹²⁴⁰ Tissoni (2000, 17, n. 10) noted that the expression ἐν τοῖς Λυδιακοῖς could be a general mention of a work on Lydian topics (such as the *Patria of Tralles*: cf. **T1**). In a similar way, Kaldellis suggested that the scholium makes reference to Lydian *patria* (cf. *BNJ* 283, F1). Given the following textual quote, I would take our passage as a precise reference instead. The scholiast (or his source) had Christodorus’ poem at disposal: it would have been strange for him to quote a text *verbatim* miswriting its title.

¹²⁴¹ See the Λυδιακά of Xanthos (*FGrHist* 765 = *BNJ* 765), Hellanicus of Lesbos (*FGrHist* 4 = *BNJ* 4), and Dositheus (*FGrHist* 54 = *BNJ* 54).

¹²⁴² Cf. 2016, 163–164.

¹²⁴³ In all probability, the success of poetry in late antiquity influenced also the evolution of *patria*: see the introduction to **n. 8**.

¹²⁴⁴ See, in particular, the studies of Baumgarten (1881, 22–51) and – more recently – that of Tissoni (2000, 69–73).

Source date: tenth century AD.

ΧΡΙΣΤΟΔΩΡΟΥ ποιητοῦ Θηβαίου Κοπτίτου: for the origin and the structure of the *Palatine Anthology*, see the commentary to **n. 5, T1**. The manuscript *Palatinus graecus* 23 reports 408 lines of Christodorus' *Ekphrasis* (ff. 64–76, 15). A longer version (416 hexameters) is presented by the codex *Marcianus graecus* 481 (ff. 58^v–61^v), which contains the so-called *Planudean Anthology*.¹²⁴⁵ Collected by the Byzantine monk Maximus Planudes in the thirteenth century, the collection places the poem of Christodorus in the fifth book; the *Palatine Anthology* has it in the second one.¹²⁴⁶ Despite the great number of verses it contains, the Planudean text is not complete: as noted by Baumgarten, the original work must have included also a iambic proem indicating its author, addressee, and the occasion it had been written for.¹²⁴⁷ When the composition was inserted in the anthologies, it was not considered a single work anymore, but a series of sixty-five epigrams instead: the structure of the poem (see below) and the stichic nature of its hexameters favored the idea.¹²⁴⁸ Sectioned in this way, the *Ekphrasis* had its proem eliminated as a foreign body: the sixty-five lemmata introducing the new epigrams were inserted in its place.¹²⁴⁹ It is not possible to say when such a reorganization took place. It is attested for the first time in the *Palatinus graecus* 23, but the *Palatinus* was not the only codex going around. One of its correctors – the one usually named C by editors – seems to have corrected the text of the *Ekphrasis* using

¹²⁴⁵ For an introduction to the *Planudean Anthology*, see Jeffreys 1991, 873.

¹²⁴⁶ About the connection of the *Ekphrasis* with the rest of the *Greek Anthology*, see Bär 2012, 461–463.

¹²⁴⁷ Cf. 1880, 8. The scholar noted that the end of the composition does not seem complete as well. The idea of a lost proem has been followed by Beckby 1965, 185, Stupperich 1982, 214, and Guberti Bassett 1996, 493, Tissoni 2000, 57. *Contra* Waltz 1928, 53 n. 7.

¹²⁴⁸ Cf. Friedländer 1912, 94, n. 2; Cameron 1973, 106.

¹²⁴⁹ Cf. Tissoni 2000, 63.

another copy of it.¹²⁵⁰ Even Planudes must have had a second manuscript at his disposal: this explains the lines he added to the Palatine text. The division of Christodorus' poem could have been made by the copyist of the *Palatinus* (= the first copyist, usually called A), who wrote the title of the second book and the lemma of the first statue.¹²⁵¹ But it is also possible that A copied an already divided text. The process is particularly interesting for our analysis because it involves the mention of Christodorus. If the scribe A removed the proem, divided the text and added the title, the reference to "Christodorus, the Theban poet of Coptus" must be attributed to him. If, on the contrary, he already found the text organized as it is today (more or less: some lemmata were surely added later), the testimony could be dated to an earlier moment. To make things more complicated, the Planudean manuscript reports a similar title: ἐκφρασις Χριστοδώρου ποιητοῦ Θηβαίου Κοπίτου τῶν ἀγαλμάτων τῶν εἰς τὸ δημόσιον γυμνάσιον τοῦ ἐπικαλουμένου Ζευξίππου.¹²⁵² As it is possible to see, the heading changes the order of the words and miswrites one of them (the ethnic Κοπίτου, deprived of the first τ). Did Planudes copy his title from the Palatine manuscript or from the second codex he used? The latter case would confirm that the division of Christodorus' text and the reference to his origin were already in use before A. Whether the title was a creation of A or not, it mentions Christodorus as a Theban poet from Coptus. As already stated, the note is quite important: it could confirm that the two entries of the *Suda* refer to the same person (cf. T1).

ΕΚΦΡΑΣΙΣ τῶν ἀγαλμάτων τῶν εἰς τὸ δημόσιον γυμνάσιον τοῦ ἐπικαλουμένου Ζευξίππου: the poem of Christodorus focuses on the Zeuxippos, the great thermal structure of Constantinople. Founded – according to the tradition – by Septimius Severus in 196 AD, the baths contained a huge assemblage of works of art.¹²⁵³ As the title reveals, Christodorus' poem is the description (ἐκφρασις) of eighty statues

¹²⁵⁰ Cf. Tissoni 2000, 64. Cameron (1993, 147) considered it the proof that Christodorus was already in Cephala's collection. About Constantine Cephalas, see the commentary to n. 5, T1.

¹²⁵¹ Cf. Stadtmüller 1894, 36.

¹²⁵² Cf. Stadtmüller 1894, *loc. cit.*

¹²⁵³ Cf. Tissoni 2000, 74–85.

coming from this collection.¹²⁵⁴ This kind of literary portrayal has always been popular in ancient literature.¹²⁵⁵ The first example comes from the *Iliad*, where Homer gives a detailed description of Achilles' shield.¹²⁵⁶ Many authors followed: among them, Theocritus,¹²⁵⁷ Apollonius of Rhodes,¹²⁵⁸ Catullus,¹²⁵⁹ Vergil,¹²⁶⁰ Ovid,¹²⁶¹ and Philostratus the Elder.¹²⁶² Christodorus is just a link in this long chain.¹²⁶³ After him, other ἐκφράσεις were written by Paul the Silentiary (Ἐκφρασις τοῦ ναοῦ τῆς Ἁγίας Σοφίας, "Description of the sanctuary of Holy Wisdom"),¹²⁶⁴ John of Gaza (Ἐκφρασις τοῦ κοσμικοῦ πίνακος, "Description of an image of the world"),¹²⁶⁵ and Procopius of Gaza (Ἐκφρασις εἰκόνης, "Description of a painting");¹²⁶⁶ these works reflect the popularity of the genre in the early Byzantine age.¹²⁶⁷ In all probability, Christodorus' poem was written in the first years of the sixth century: Cameron proposes to date it to no later than 500; Tissone thinks to 503 instead.¹²⁶⁸ According to Kaldellis, the poem was "performed before an audience at the Zeuxippos" (2007, 369).

¹²⁵⁴ This structure favored the interpretation of the *Ekphrasis* as a series of epigrams (see above).

¹²⁵⁵ Many studies have been written about ancient ekphrastic literature: see – just to list some recent examples – the works of Elsner 2002, Ratkowitsch 2006, Goldhill 2007, Webb 2009, and Koopman 2014 (esp. 1–54). About the rhetorical background of the genre, see the summary of Norton 2013, 9–34.

¹²⁵⁶ Cf. *Il.* XVIII 478–608. See Becker 1995; Koopman 2014, 87–166.

¹²⁵⁷ Cf. *Id.* I 27–60; see Koopman 2014, 227–266.

¹²⁵⁸ Cf. I 721–768; see Koopman 2014, 267–304.

¹²⁵⁹ Cf. 64; see Laird 1993.

¹²⁶⁰ Cf. *Aen.* VIII 617–731; see Putnam 1998; Faber 2000; Rogerson 2002.

¹²⁶¹ Cf. *Met.* II 850–III 2; see Behymer 2010; Norton 2013, esp. 145–184.

¹²⁶² For a critical text of his *Images*, see Benndorf-Schenkel 1893; see also Lehmann-Hartleben 1941, Ghedini 2000, and Abbondanza 2008.

¹²⁶³ Cf. Bär 2012, esp. 458–460.

¹²⁶⁴ Critical text in De Stefani 2011; see also Whitby 1985, Macrides–Magdalino 1988; Kostenec–Dark 2011.

¹²⁶⁵ Critical text in Lauritzen 2015; see also Cupane 1979.

¹²⁶⁶ Critical text in Amato–Maréchaux 2014, 157–220; see also Friedländer 1939 and Talgam 2004.

¹²⁶⁷ See the seminal study of Friedländer 1912.

¹²⁶⁸ Cf. Cameron 1973, 154; Tissoni 2000, 21–23.

7.

CLAUDIANUS (FGrHist 282; BNJ 282)

Introduction

The *Palatine Anthology* ascribes nine epigrams to a poet named Claudianus: two of them come from the first book (19–20), one from the fifth (86), and four from the ninth (139–140, 753–754). A scholion to the first of these texts informs us that the Claudianus who wrote it “is the one who wrote the *patria* of Tarsus, Anazarbus, Berytus and Nicaea” (cf. **T1**). The identification of this poet is difficult. As Cameron has shown, the nine poems attributed to Claudianus have to be ascribed to two namesakes at least (see below). Which one is the author of the *patria*? Three possibilities have been proposed.

Jacoby identified the patriographer Claudianus with the namesake presented by the *Ecclesiastical History* of Evagrius Scholasticus as one of the main poets of the Theodosian age (cf. *HE* I 19, 17 = **T2**).¹²⁶⁹ The historian names him as a peer of Cyrus of Panopolis, counselor of the emperor and *protégé* of his wife Eudocia (see below). The passage allowed Jacoby to date Claudianus to the first half of the fifth century AD. His interpretation was followed by Schmid.¹²⁷⁰

A second possibility was proposed by Cameron, who attributed the four *patria* to Claudian, the court poet of the emperor Honorius.¹²⁷¹ The poet spent some years in the East before coming to Rome and supposedly wrote something in Greek: the *patria* could be part of his Greek production, along with the famous *Gigantomachia*. Since some passages of Claudian’s panegyrics reveal a direct knowledge of

¹²⁶⁹ Cf. *FGrHist* 282, T1.

¹²⁷⁰ Cf. 1957, 168–169.

¹²⁷¹ Cf. 1970, 7–14. While referring to Claudian, I use the traditional name, in order to distinguish him from other namesakes (= Claudianus). The bibliography on the poet is endless. For a proper introduction to him and to his cultural context, see the studies of Cameron (1970; 2000, 127–144), Döpp (1980); Ehlers – Felgentreu – Wheeler (2004); Mulligan (2007, 285–310); Guipponi–Gineste (2010).

Constantinople, we can suppose that the poet visited the capital of the Eastern Empire before going to the West.¹²⁷² The cities mentioned by the scholion “are all nicely placed on a leisurely route from Alexandria to Constantinople” (Cameron 1970, 26). The poet likely visited Berytus, Anazarbus, Tarsus and Nicaea in his way to the eastern capital and composed *patria* for all of them. These works should therefore be dated to the second half of the fourth century AD. According to Cameron, two sections of Nonnus’ *Dionysiaca* are inspired by them (see below).¹²⁷³

The third hypothesis has been proposed by Janiszewski, who identified the author of the *patria* as the philosopher Claudianus of Alexandria.¹²⁷⁴ As Eunapius reports, he settled in the Egyptian city, where he taught philosophy in the mid-fourth century AD.¹²⁷⁵ According to the *PLRE*, he could be the father or the grandfather of the poet Claudian.¹²⁷⁶

Not all these hypotheses are equally strong. First, the writing of *patria* was not matter for professors of philosophy. Four works focusing on the antiquities of cities denote something different from the antiquarian interests of the erudite: they reveal the activity of a professional poet instead. This invalidates Janiszewski’s proposal.¹²⁷⁷ Second, the interpretation of Cameron is not without problems either. Indeed, the dependence of Nonnus on the *patria* of Claudianus is not sure at all: other sources could be at his disposal (see below). Moreover, there is no necessary connection between the physical location of an

¹²⁷² Cf. *Ruf.* II 348–349; *Eutr.* II 335–336. About Claudian’s connections with the eastern capital, see Kelly 2012.

¹²⁷³ In his 2015 volume of collected studies, the scholar implicitly dissociates himself from his hypothesis, but does not give further explanations: «a certain Claudian (probably not the famous Claudian) likewise wrote a number of *Patria* (now lost), on Tarsus, Anazarbus, Berytus, and Nicaea [...]. It was long ago conjectured that the detailed section on the foundation of Berytus in Nonnus (*Dion.* 41.14–398) derives from Claudian’s poem on the subject, and Nonnus’s equally detailed accounts of the foundation of Nicaea (15.169–16) and Tyre (40.298–580) were presumably based on *Patria* by some unknown predecessor» (2015, 19–20). In spite of Cameron’s recent change of mind, his proposal remains a plausible hypothesis: cf. *BNJ* 282, T1.

¹²⁷⁴ Cf. 2006, 304–312.

¹²⁷⁵ Cf. *VS* VII 1,4; XVIII 1,1.

¹²⁷⁶ Cf. *PLRE*, I 207 (‘Claudianus 2’).

¹²⁷⁷ About these professional poets, see Cameron 2016, 1–35.

author and the place he describes: the *patria* of Tarsus could have been written outside of Cilicia.¹²⁷⁸ Finally, how many possibilities had a Byzantine scholiast of the tenth-century to know a poet who had mainly worked in the Latin west? The last possible interpretation is that of Jacoby. On the one hand, it matches with the date of epigram I 19 (see below). On the other hand, it gives an identity to the poet quoted by Evagrius, whose identification with the Latin poet Claudian is less convincing (see below). Moreover, it places the author of *patria* in an interesting political and cultural context. The age of Theodosius II was characterized by great administrative reforms and all the cities listed by the scholion were involved. The *patria* of Claudianus can be taken as the outcome of the new political role of Tarsus, Anazarbus and Berytus, and the economic and social boom of Nicaea (see below). Jacoby's interpretation is the most trustworthy: the author of the *patria*, then, lived in the reign of Theodosius II and also wrote epigrams I 19–20, and IX 139.

This Claudianus appears as a typical exponent of fifth-century culture: a Greek *poète de circonstance*, active in the eastern empire. Like other poets of the period, he made a literary career composing poetry for public occasions, offering his services to the cities, the aristocrats and the imperial officials. He dedicated his *patria* to four cities involved in the movements and the reforms of the imperial court between 408 and 450, reaching such a great success that he was compared to the powerful and famous poet Cyrus, *protégé* of the empress Eudocia and counselor of Theodosius II. This reference made Evagrius Scholasticus quote him as one of the most famous poets of the Theodosian age. In spite of his success, his poems are lost, suffering the same fate as other *patria*.¹²⁷⁹ However, some of his epigrams have survived in the *Greek Anthology* and the knowledge of the *patria* came somehow to the Byzantine lemmatist of the *Palatine Anthology*.

¹²⁷⁸ Cf. Janiszewski 2006, 309.

¹²⁷⁹ Given the local focus of these compositions, their loss is not surprising: cf. Cameron 2016, 165–166.

Testimonia

1. Schol. AP 1, 19 (435 Hall)

οὗτος ὁ Κλαυδιανὸς ἐστὶν ὁ γράψας τὰ Πάτρια Θαρσοῦ, Ἀναζάρβου, Βηρύτου, Νικαίας.

This Claudianus is the one who wrote the *Patria* of Tarsus, Anazarbus, Berytus and Nicaea.

2. Evagr. HE I 19 (28, 17–18)

Τότε φασὶ καὶ Κλαυδιανὸν καὶ Κῦρον τοὺς ποιητὰς ἀναδειχθῆναι.

In that time – they say – both poets Claudian and Cyrus were conspicuous.

Commentary

T 1

Source date: tenth century AD?

οὗτος ὁ Κλαυδιανός ἐστίν: the scholion refers to the epigram I 19 of the *Anthology*, a Christian composition entitled Εἰς τὸν σωτῆρα (*To the Saviour*). Another epigram of Claudianus presents the same Christian theme.¹²⁸⁰ Along with these two texts, the *corpus* of the poet includes a hymn to Apollo (V 86), an erotic satire (IX 139), a comic sketch (IX 140), and a couple of *jeux littéraires* on a crystal ball full of water (IX 753–754). The great variety of topics goes along with wide variety of styles. These epigrams should be attributed to two poets. Epigrams IX 753–754 present a strong thematic affinity with Claudian's *carm. min.* 33–39: there is therefore a good chance that the Latin poet wrote them.¹²⁸¹ The same holds true for V 86 and IX 140.¹²⁸² On the contrary, I 19–20 and IX 139 show the strong influence of Nonnus of Panopolis.¹²⁸³ Since the activity of the epic poet is commonly dated to the first decades of the fifth century, these three texts cannot be works of Claudian, who died around 404. We are therefore forced to attribute the poems of the *Anthology* to two authors at least: on the one hand, to the famous Claudian (epigrams V 86, IX 140, 753–754); on the other hand, to a later namesake, peer or disciple of Nonnus (I 19–20, IX 139). Such a confusion is not surprising: “homonymous poets are frequently confused in the ascriptions and lemmata of the *Anthology*” (Cameron 1970, 7–8). The scholion refers to epigram I 19. Strictly speaking, then, it presents the second Claudianus as the author of the four *patria*. Cameron disagreed. In his opinion, Nonnus used the works of Claudianus to write his *Dionysiaca*: indeed, “two of the longest Πάτρια that he works into his poem are those of Berytus and Nicaea – two of the four attested by the Palatine lemma” (1970, 9). The former comes from

¹²⁸⁰ Cf. *API* 20.

¹²⁸¹ Cf. Cameron 1970, 12–14.

¹²⁸² Cf. Hofmann 1997.

¹²⁸³ Cf. Cameron 1970, 12.

the forty-first book,¹²⁸⁴ the latter from the fifteenth and sixteenth.¹²⁸⁵ The digression on Berytus, in particular, also contains two allusions to Tarsus, the first city listed by the lemma.¹²⁸⁶ If three of the four *patria* listed by the scholion have been used by Nonnus, they must have been written before the *Dionysiaca*. According to Cameron, then, Claudian is the author of the *patria* and the scholiast intended to comment on him: however, he attached his note to the wrong epigram. Since he wrote in the tenth century, he could not distinguish the Nonnian epigrams from the others. He knew a Claudianus author of *patria* and noted it at the first opportunity. Indeed, the reference to the *patria* is attached to “the very first occurrence in the *Anthology* of a poem ascribed to Claudian” (1970, 8). The interpretation of Cameron is disputable. First of all, the idea that Nonnus used the *patria* of Tarsus is not particularly convincing. The two superficial references from the excursus on Berytus are not sufficient to confirm it. Both of them focus on the great antiquity of Tarsus, but name it with other famous examples (Thebes, Sardis, the Cretan Arcadia). No particular attention is given to the city, which is vaguely presented as “gladdening the heart of man” (τερψίμβροτος)¹²⁸⁷ and “the most ancient city according to the songs” (ἀειδομένη πρωτόπτολις);¹²⁸⁸ nothing indicates a specific work describing its origins.¹²⁸⁹ Secondly, it is quite hazardous to link the digressions of Nonnus to the *patria* of Claudianus just because the latter texts are the only known ones describing Berytus and Nicaea. The sources of the Dionysian passages could have been different: Gerlaud, for instance, rightly named the epic *Heroic Theogamies* (Ἡρωικαὶ θεογαμίαι) of Pisander of Laranda, written during the reign of Alexander Severus.¹²⁹⁰ Furthermore, it would be possible to hypothesize the existence of other authors, whose works have been lost. In conclusion, the idea that Nonnus used Claudianus’ *patria* is not certain enough to prove that their author worked before the Egyptian epic writer. We should instead take

¹²⁸⁴ Cf. XLI 51–427.

¹²⁸⁵ Cf. XV 169–XVI.

¹²⁸⁶ Cf. Nonn. *D.* XLI 85; 357.

¹²⁸⁷ Cf. *D.* XLI 85.

¹²⁸⁸ Cf. *D.* XLI 357.

¹²⁸⁹ Further discussion in Focanti 2016, 491, n. 23.

¹²⁹⁰ Cf. 1994, 55.

seriously what the scholion says: that the author of the Nonnian epigram I 19 wrote the *patria* of four cities. This also refutes the identification of Janiszewski, whose Claudianus lived one century before Nonnus, but not the proposal of Jacoby. Indeed, the poet quoted by Evagrius *floruit* in the first half of the fifth century AD, under the reign of Theodosius II. He was, more or less, a peer of Nonnus and could be influenced by his innovative poetry.

ὁ γράψας τὰ Πάτρια Θαρσοῦ: no other *patria* is attested for the four cities listed by the scholium.¹²⁹¹ Situated on the banks of the river Cydnus, Tarsus became the capital of the Roman province of Cilicia after 67 BC. As it was the birthplace of the apostle Paul, it enjoyed a high consideration in early Christian times. The administrative reform of Theodosius II made the city the capital of Cilicia Prima.¹²⁹²

᾿Αναζάρβου: the traditional rival of Tarsus. For an introduction to the city and its importance – above all in the first half of the fourth century AD, when it became the capital of Cilicia Secunda – see the commentary to **n. 5, T1**.

Βηρύτου: the modern Beirut. The city hosted a famous law school, particularly acclaimed from the third century AD onwards. At the end of the fourth century, Berytus was still the most important center of Phoenicia. Between 448 and 450, it obtained the official title of *μητρόπολις*.¹²⁹³

Νικαίας: the city of Nicaea was the seat of the first ecumenical council in 325 AD. Two earthquakes almost destroyed it in 363 and 369, but the emperor Valens helped with the reconstruction. Since it was placed between Constantinople and Ancyra, the two residences of Arcadius and Theodosius II, the city obtained great wealth from the presence of the emperors.¹²⁹⁴

¹²⁹¹ Cf. *BNJ* 282, *loc. cit.*

¹²⁹² Cf. Bosworth 2012.

¹²⁹³ Cf. Jones Hall 2004, 107–108.

¹²⁹⁴ Cf. Foss 1996, 12.

Source date: sixth century AD

Τότε: the passage of Evagrius refers to the time of Theodosius II. The son of Arcadius ruled over the eastern empire from 408 to 450 AD: his reign is mostly known for the promulgation of the Theodosian code and the building of the Theodosian walls of Constantinople.¹²⁹⁵ Along with Cyrus of Panopolis (see below), Evagrius quotes a Κλαυδιανός as one of the most famous poet of this age. It would be easy to identify him as the Latin poet Claudian, if the latter had not already been dead when Theodosius took the throne. If we want to sustain this identification in spite of the chronological difficulties, we need to hypothesize a mistake by Evagrius. Otherwise, we have to admit that he referred to another Claudianus. The former possibility was proposed by Cameron.¹²⁹⁶ In support of his claim, the scholar highlighted two elements: *in primis*, that Evagrius' text makes reference to Claudianus without further clarification; it "suggests that he was writing of a famous poet", who did not need any introduction. Who was more famous than Claudian, the court poet of Honorius for almost ten years? *In secundis*, Cameron argued that Evagrius wrote two centuries after Theodosius and had no clear idea of the period he was describing. His uncertainty about chronology should be evident from the vague φασί ("they say") introducing the passage. Given his identification of Claudian as the obscure poet mentioned by the scholium, Cameron's interpretation is not surprising. However, the "uncertainty" of Evagrius is not so great as Cameron made it out to be (as regards his use of φασί, see below). According to Whitby, Evagrius' "vague awareness of fifth century affairs" (2000, 47, n. 169) is shown "by his description of the prominent Christians, Isidore and Synesius (i.15), and the poets, Claudian and Cyrus (i.19), of whom only the last in fact flourished during the period covered by the History" (2000, XXXII). Taking these four names as proofs of chronological confusion is not correct. First of all, the two Christians are cited without any reference to intermediary sources,

¹²⁹⁵ For further information about Theodosius' reign, see the studies of Millar (2006) and Kelly (2013).

¹²⁹⁶ Cf. 1970, 8.

whereas Claudianus and Cyrus are introduced in a quote. It demonstrates that the two pairs of personalities are not necessarily linked to each other. In other words, if Isidore and Synesius were out of context in the reign of Theodosius, it would not mean that Cyrus and Claudianus were also unrelated. Deducing the un-relatedness of Claudianus from the extraneousness of Isidore and Synesius is methodically incorrect. Furthermore, the biographies of the two Christians show that Evagrius is not far wrong. Indeed, the only unrelated character on the list is Synesius of Cyrene. He lived between 370 and 413 AD, too early to spend many years under the reign of Theodosius. A hypothetical reason for this inaccurate insertion is revealed by the text of Evagrius: when listing the works of the bishop, he also mentions a speech addressed to Theodosius (ὁ τε πρὸς αὐτὸν Θεοδοσίον προσφωνητικὸς λόγος).¹²⁹⁷ This λόγος supposedly corresponds to the speech εἰς τὸν αὐτοκράτορα περὶ βασιλείας (*To the Emperor on Kinship*), composed between 397 and 400 AD and delivered, during an embassy, in front of Arcadius.¹²⁹⁸ In spite of the original addressee, “two extant manuscripts do [...] name the addressee as Theodosius, and a lemma specifies that this was Theodosius I. Evagrius presumably believed that it was addressed to Theodosius II” (Whitby 2000, 42, n. 151). The other Christian named with Synesius is Isidore of Pelusium, abbot of a monastery near the Nile Delta between 400 and 440.¹²⁹⁹ Since Theodosius ruled from 408 to 450, he coexisted with the monk at least thirty-three years. Evagrius himself notices that the abbot wrote against the patriarch Cyril of Alexandria, whose connections with the court of Theodosius are well attested.¹³⁰⁰ In conclusion, out of a list of four personalities, just one of them is wrong, and we can explain why this is the case. Concerning Claudianus, the only obstacle to accepting him in the list is the identification with the poet Claudian proposed by Cameron. However, there is the possibility that Evagrius made reference to another namesake. The Κλαυδιανός of the passage could be a

¹²⁹⁷ Cf. *HE I* 15, 26–27 Bidez – Parmentier.

¹²⁹⁸ For a general introduction, see Lamoureux – Aujoulat 2008, 1–82.

¹²⁹⁹ Cf. Evieux 1995.

¹³⁰⁰ See, for instance, the management of the Nestorian Controversy: cf. Russell 2000, 31–58; Millar 2006, 149–167.

different author, contemporary to Theodosius, and all the difficulties would disappear.

φασί: according to Cameron (1970, 8), the use of the “vague φασί” reveals that Evagrius was not certain of his chronology. Such an argument is necessary for him to identify the Κλαυδιανός of the passage with the earlier Claudian, and to place him in the reign of Theodosius II by mistake (see above). Another explanation is possible, though. Before introducing Claudianus and Cyrus, Evagrius describes the foreign policy of Theodosius. At the end of the presentation, immediately before our passage, the historian adds: “These matters are exposed by others, but have been summarized with great elegance by Eustathius the Syrian from Epiphania: he also told of the capture of Amida” (ἄπερ ἱστόρηται μὲν καὶ ἄλλοις, ἐπιτέμνηται δὲ εὖ μάλα κομψῶς καὶ Εὐσταθίῳ τῷ ἐξ Ἐπιφανείας τῷ Σύρῳ, ὃς καὶ τὴν ἄλωσιν Ἀμίδης συνεγράψατο).¹³⁰¹ The φασί of *HE* I 19,17 can be linked to these historians, namely to Eustathius of Epiphania and the sources he summarized.¹³⁰² Given how important Cyrus’ position was between 439 and 441 (see below), the fact that works describing the policy of those years mention him is not difficult to explain. Claudianus supposedly was named with him because of the poetic profession they shared. In conclusion, referring the lack of information of our passage to the great fame of the poet is questionable. Cyrus was a great and famous author as well, but Evagrius gives a lot of information about him. The scanty mention of Claudianus probably reflects the original imbalance of Evagrius’ sources.

καὶ Κλαυδιανὸν καὶ Κῦρον τοὺς ποιητάς: Cyrus of Panopolis is one of the most illustrious figures of the reign of Theodosius II. Born in Panopolis, he moved to Constantinople. There, with the protection of the empress Eudocia, he rapidly advanced in his career: he was prefect of the city and the East in 439 and reached the consulate in 441. Accused of pagan sympathies, he was exiled to Cotyaeum, where he remained as

¹³⁰¹ Cf. *HE* I 19, 13–16.

¹³⁰² For an introduction to Eustathius of Epiphania, see Marksches 2006.

a bishop until the death of Theodosius. After 450 he returned to Constantinople. Of his poetic production just a few epigrams survive.¹³⁰³

ἀναδειχθῆναι: Claudianus is presented by Evagrius as one of the most famous poets of Theodosian age. Such a great fame explains how the Byzantine scholiast could still know of him in the tenth century. On the contrary, if we read the scholion as a reference to Claudian, the situation would be less linear. Indeed, we should expect a Byzantine report about a poet who had mainly worked in the Latin west. Moreover: a poet who had worked in the Latin west, when the western empire was in crisis with the eastern counterpart.¹³⁰⁴ Already in the sixth century AD, Claudian was read in Constantinople just by those able to read Latin.¹³⁰⁵ When the knowledge of the language was dismissed, his verses probably faced the same fate.¹³⁰⁶

¹³⁰³ Cf. Constantelos 1971, 451–464; Miguélez–Cavero 2008, 29–31; van der Horst 2014, 220–229; Cameron 2016, 37–64.

¹³⁰⁴ The Eastern court did not appreciate the attempts of Stilicho to rule both the sides of the empire of Theodosius the Great: cf. Zos. V 4.

¹³⁰⁵ Like John Lyd. *De mag.* I 47 (cf. Schamp 2001, 971–991).

¹³⁰⁶ Unlike the heirs of the western empire, who kept copying and using his poems: see Cameron 1970, 419–426.

8.

UDIOGENES OF CYZICUS

(FHG IV 391–392; FGrHist 474; BNJ 474)

Introduction

Diogenes of Cyzicus is quite a mysterious personality. The elements we get from the sources are modest, but raise some interesting problems. The *Suda* devotes a brief entry to the grammarian and presents him as Διογένης ἢ Διογενειανός: such a double form has been considered erroneous since the time of Müller, who attributed it to confusion with the second-century grammarian Diogenianus of Heraclea.¹³⁰⁷ This interpretation was followed by the later scholars: while analyzing the testimony of the lexicon and the list of titles it reports, they tried to separate the works of Diogenes from those of Diogenianus. Such an approach seriously risks being arbitrary (cf. T1).

In his edition, Müller inserted a quote by Clemens of Alexandria. The Christian author presents the veneration of fire by the Persian μάγοι and quotes the Περσικά of an unspecified Διογένης.¹³⁰⁸ The uncertain nature of the passage was clear to Müller himself, who presented the link to the Cyzicenan grammarian as a simple suggestion.¹³⁰⁹ Indeed, the only basis for the identification is the homonymy of the two authors: this element is weakened by the great diffusion of the name in the Greek world.¹³¹⁰ Moreover, the reference of the *Suda* to a Πάτρια Κυζίκου reveals a late dating: that makes a quote by Clemens highly improbable.¹³¹¹

The work of Diogenes is quoted in three passages of Stephanus of Byzantium too. He reports the title in what seems to be an abridged

¹³⁰⁷ Cf. 1851, 391–392.

¹³⁰⁸ Cf. *Protr.* 5, 65, 1 = FHG IV 392.

¹³⁰⁹ Cf. 1851, 392. The quote has been definitely excluded by Jacoby (cf. *FGrHist* 474).

¹³¹⁰ The inscriptions remember five Diogenes in Cyzicus alone: cf. Schwertheim 1980, n. 26, 52, 81, 253, 353.

¹³¹¹ Cf. Schwartz 1903, 737–738.

form (i.e. ordinal number + Κυζίκου: cf. **FF 1** and **3**). The second fragment is of particular interest (in spite of all its textual problems: cf. **F2**): it contains a direct quote of Diogenes' work and reveals it to be in prose.¹³¹² Such a prosenature shows the writing of *patria* to be freer than we could expect from formal rules. The work of Diogenes was divided in three books at least (cf. **F3**). Some scholars suggested increasing the number up to seven, but the proposal does not have strong justification (cf. **F2**).

The aim of the *patria* was supposedly the glorification of Cyzicus: that explains the idealistic tone of its fragments. The author describes the islands placed all around the city as γόνιμοι καὶ λιπαραί ("fertile and fruitful"), even if reality was quite different (cf. **F2**). The city of Zeleia is reduced to a φρούριον Κυζίκου, a mere "fort of Cyzicus" (cf. **F3**). Local myths are subjugated to the same need. The first quote of Stephanus mentions the nymph Adrastea, the mythical nurse of the baby Zeus. The testimony of Strabo reveals that the goddess was venerated in a sanctuary near Cyzicus: the author of the Πάτρια Κυζίκου probably made reference to these cults to link his city to the birth of Zeus (cf. **F1**). Such a uninhibited use of myth is not surprising in Greek world: already between the fourth and the third centuries BC, the poet Callimachus had teased the different versions concerning the birth of Zeus.¹³¹³

As I already said in the general introduction, the prose form of Diogenes' *patria* could be used to date it approximately to the third century AD (cf. § 3). This was a difficult period for Cyzicus. At the end of the preceding century, Septimius Severus had deprived the neighboring Byzantium of its fortifications, in order to punish the city for its support of Pescennius Nigrus. This measure had left the entire Propontis without defense: as a result, Cyzicus was sacked many times in the following years.¹³¹⁴ In the late third century, Diocletian pacified the region and named Cyzicus the capital of the province of Hellespontus, leading to decades of prosperity. The foundation of Constantinople in 330 AD and

¹³¹² Cf. *FGrHist* 474, F2.

¹³¹³ Cf. *Hymn.* 1, 1–14.

¹³¹⁴ Cf. Hasluck 1910, p. 189–190.

its affirmation as the leading center of the region caused the decline of the city.¹³¹⁵

By considering the late antique history of Cyzicus on the one hand, and the celebratory nature of the *patria* on the other, I would hazard a more precise dating. The composition of a text glorifying a city and its traditions could be linked to a particularly prosperous moment for the city itself.¹³¹⁶ Cyzicus' best years were between the second half of the third century AD and the first half of the fourth, after the emperor Diocletian had named it the capital of Hellespontus. The *patria* of Diogenes could well have been written in this period, in order to celebrate the new strategic role of Cyzicus in the eastern administration. One could date its composition to the last decades of the third century AD, when the Crisis of the Third Century was over, and the cumbersome vicinity of Constantinople was still to come.¹³¹⁷

¹³¹⁵ Cf. Drew-Bear 1998, p. 26–27.

¹³¹⁶ About the connection between late antique *patria* and the urban development of the Roman empire, see the general introduction (§ 3).

¹³¹⁷ This hypothetical dating is based on the equation: prose text = early redaction. As already seen, the binomial could be disputed (see the general introduction, § 3).

Testimonia

1. Sud. δ 1146

Διογένης, <ῆ> Διογενειανοῦ, Κυζικηνός, γραμματικός. ἔγραψε Πάτρια Κυζίκου, Περὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς βιβλίοις σημείων, Περὶ ποιητικῆς, Περὶ στοιχείων.

1. <ῆ> Διογενειανοῦ : ego | ῆ Διογενειανός codd. | secl. Müller || Πάτρια : cum Kuster (apud Bernhardt) | πατρία codd. | <περὶ> πατρία<ς Κυζίκου> Saumaise || 2 – 3. Περὶ–στοιχείων : codd. | secl. Jacoby

Diogenes, son of Diogenianus, of Cyzicus, grammarian. He wrote the *Patria of Cyzicus, On the Signs in Books, On Poetry, On Letters*.

Fragmenta

Πάτρια Κυζίκου

1

Steph. Byz. *Ethn.* s.v. Ἀδράστεια (α 64 Billerbeck)

Διογένης ἐν πρώτῃ Κυζίκου φησὶν ἀπὸ Ἀδραστείας κεκληῖσθαι μιᾶς τῶν Ὀρεστιάδων νυμφῶν.

1. ἐν πρώτῃ Κυζίκου : codd. | ἐν πρώτῃ <περὶ> Κυζίκου van Berkel | ἐν πρώτῃ *** Κυζίκου Schwartz || πρώτῃ : PQN | πρώτῳ R || Ὀρεστιάδων : QR | Ὀρεστειάδων PN

Adrastea, between Priapus and Parius, from the king Adrastus, the first to build the temple of Nemesis. The region was called Adrastea, like the plain and the city. Diogenes in the first book of Cyzicus says that the city takes its name from Adrastea, one of the nymphs of the mountains.

2

Steph. Byz. *Ethn.* s.v. Βέσβικος (β 79 Billerbeck)

Βέσβικος, νησίδιον περὶ Κύζικον, ὡς Διογένης ὁ Κυζικηνὸς ἐν πρώτῃ, περὶ τῶν ἑπτὰ τῆς πατρίδος νήσων λέγων· “Προκόννησος καὶ Φοίβη καὶ Ἀλώνη καὶ Φυσία καὶ Ὀφιοῦσσα καὶ Βέσβικος, γόνιμοι καὶ λιπαραί.”

1. – 2. περὶ τῶν – νήσων : cum Vossio | τῶν ἑπτὰ περὶ τ.π.ν. codd. | περὶ τῶν [ἑπτὰ] τ.π.ν. Bernhardt | *** τῶν ἑπτὰ περὶ τ.π.ν. Schwartz | τῶν ἑπτὰ, περὶ <τῶν> τ.π.ν. dub. Jacoby | τῶν ζ' περὶ <τῶν> τ.π.ν. Billerbeck || 2. προκόννησος R : προκόννησος QPN || φοίβη : Q | φοινίκη RPN | Φοίβη καὶ Φοινίκη dub. Jacoby (e Plinio V 151) || 3. Ἀλώνη : cum Meineke (e Stephano α238) | ἀλόνη codd. || Ὀφιοῦσσα : cum Meineke | ὀφίουσσα R | -ίουσα Q | -ιόεσσα PN || γόνιμοι καὶ λιπαραί : cum Holstein | Γ. καὶ Λ. van Berkel

Besbicus, small island around Cyzicus, as Diogenes of Cyzicus in the first book of Cyzicus. He says about the seven islands of his homeland: “Proconnesus, Phoebe, Halone, Physia, Ophioussa and Besbicus, fertile and fruitful”.

3

Steph. Byz. *Ethn.* s.v. Ζέλεια (ζ 15 Billerbeck)

Ζέλεια, πόλις Τρωάδος [...]. ἔστι καὶ Ζέλεια φρούριον Κυζίκου, ὡς Διογένης ἐν τρίτῃ Κυζίκου.

2. ἐν τρίτῃ Κυζίκου : codd. | ἐν τρίτῃ <περὶ> Κυζίκου van Berkel || Κυζίκου : codd. | secl. Schwarz

Zeleia, a city of Troad [...]. Zeleia is the name of a fortress of Cyzicus too, as Diogenes in the third book of Cyzicus.

Commentary

T 1

Source date: tenth century AD.

Διογένης ἢ Διογενειανός: taking inspiration from a hypothesis of Bernhardt,¹³¹⁸ Müller expunged the second name of Diogenes. According to the scholar, the *Suda* added it because of confusion with Diogenianus of Heraclea, the grammarian of the Hadrianic age.¹³¹⁹ The author of the lexicon found the titles of some of his works “in codice aliquo depravato Diogeni tributa” (1851, 391) and attributed them to the author of the Πάτρια Κυζίκου. However, since other codices correctly reported the name of the grammarian as Diogenianus, the *Suda* also mentioned this second form.¹³²⁰ The interpretation of Müller has been developed by Jacoby, who identified the works of Diogenianus (Περὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς βιβλίοις σημείων, Περὶ ποιητικῆς, Περὶ στοιχείων) and put them in square brackets.¹³²¹ The operation is quite hazardous. Even if the *Suda* attributed some works of Diogenianus to Diogenes, it is not possible to determine which ones. Jacoby expunged all the grammatical treatises, as if an author of *patria* could not have been interested in writing them. That is not true. The sources cite other grammarians with historical and antiquarian interests, such as Lupercus of Beirut¹³²² and Horapollon.¹³²³ Nothing impedes the author of the Πάτρια Κυζίκου from having written one, two, or all the grammatical works mentioned by the entry. Moreover, the erroneous reading of a manuscript is not the only possible way to explain an incorrect addition. It is possible too that Diogenes and Diogenianus wrote grammatical works with the same

¹³¹⁸ Cf. 1834, 1378.

¹³¹⁹ For a general presentation of Diogenianus of Heraclea (along with bibliographical references), see Tosi (1997, 605-606). Müller reported also a quote of the *Etymologicum Magnum* (34, 6) referring to the *Chronicle* of a certain Diogenianus (cf. 1851, 392). The link with the grammarian is feeble.

¹³²⁰ Cf. 1851, 391.

¹³²¹ Cf. *FGrHist* 474, T1. Cuypers too followed Müller’s hypothesis: she did not alter the list of titles, but expunged ἢ Διογενειανός: cf. *BNJ* 474, T1.

¹³²² Cf. *FGrHist* 636 = *BNJ* 636.

¹³²³ Cf. n. 10.

titles. An examination of the texts mentioned by the *Suda* shows how common their topics were in late antiquity (see below). When reading in a manuscript of Diogenianus the same titles of Diogenes' *corpus*, the author of the entry (or his source) supposedly thought he had a second name of the same grammarian. Therefore, he mentioned it. Unfortunately, this conjecture too raises problems. Which titles of Diogenes should be attributed also to Diogenianus? What should a philologist do with them? Paste them into the entry of the grammarian of Heraclea? It is clear that the second hypothesis is as arbitrary as the first. Moreover, there is another difficulty. Cuypers set it out: "the other works which the *Suda* lists for Diogenes [...] are quite different from the output which the *Suda* lists for Diogeneianos, which beside his influential *Comprehensive Lexicon* (Λέξις παντοδαπή, also referenced as Περιεργοπένητες) only includes catalogue works [...]. The works listed under Diogenes [...] are of a more critical nature" (*BNJ* 774, T1). The interests of the two authors do not coincide. This fact undermines every connection made between Diogenianus and Diogenes, and leads to another possibility: that the former has nothing to do with the latter (or with the latter's entry). I suggest we try this 'Third Way'. Once the grammarian of Heraclea has been removed, Διογενειανός could be taken as a real second name attributed to Diogenes somewhere in the tradition.¹³²⁴ Other entries in the *Suda* present the same indecision between two alternatives.¹³²⁵ There is, however, another possibility. The *Suda* often gives information about the fathers of the authors it presents:¹³²⁶ it may have done the same for Diogenes. I propose to interpret the second name of the grammarian as an incorrect reading of a patronymic: Διογένης Διογενειανοῦ (> Διογένης Διογενειανός?) > Διογένης ἢ Διογενειανός. The result of this reasoning would be the following text: Διογένης, Διογενειανοῦ, Κυζικηνός, γραμματικός. It

¹³²⁴ There is also the possibility that the second name resulted from confusion with yet another Diogenianus, distinct from the grammarian of Heraclea. Such a hypothesis is not convincing. It presents the problems of Müller's interpretation, and raises further difficulties: who is this new Diogenianus? How did he end up in the entry of Diogenes?

¹³²⁵ E.g. *Sud.* β 7, δ 1142, θ 64.

¹³²⁶ Just the letter α, for instance, provides twenty-two examples: cf. *Suda* α 239, 392, 2191, 2657, 2703, 2735, 2745, 2800, 3215, 3407, 3423, 3900, 3903, 3908, 3912, 3913, 3914, 3960, 4084, 4105, 4173, 4683.

resembles other entries of the *Suda*.¹³²⁷ Furthermore, it requires neither strong interventions in the text, nor alterations to its list of works. Indeed, the major difficulties with Diogenes' entry arise from the uncomfortable link made between this author and Diogenianus: once the grammarian of Heraclea has been removed, almost all the problems disappear.

Κυζικηνός: the great knowledge Diogenes has of Cyzicus' region confirms what the *Suda* reports on his origin (cf. **FF 1–3**).¹³²⁸

γραμματικός: according to Kaster, "there is a very good chance that Diogenes was not a γραμματικός at all" (1988, 399). The view of the scholar is due to the supposed confusion between the author of *patria* and the grammarian Diogenianus. As already said, the hypothetical identification with the latter does not prevent the former being a grammarian as well. The negative perspective of Kaster is therefore not justified.

Πάτρια Κυζίκου: the form of the title as reported by the *Suda* links Diogenes' work to the tradition of *patria* and therefore suggests a late dating (between the third and the sixth centuries AD).¹³²⁹ Stephanus quotes the work in a different way: it is probably an abridgement of the version of the *Suda* (see below). In his edition of the geographer, Saumaise noted the passage of the lexicon too. He corrected the erroneous reading of the manuscripts (πατρία) in *περὶ πατρίας Κυζίκου*.¹³³⁰ In spite of the support expressed by Ranke,¹³³¹ the correction πατρία > πάτρια remains the best solution.

¹³²⁷ E.g. *Sud.* α 2191: Ἀνδροτίων, Ἀνδρωνος, Ἀθηναῖος, ῥήτωρ καὶ δημαγωγός («Androtion, son of Andrus, of Athens, rhetorician and popular leader»); α 2657: Ἀντιγενίδης, Σατύρου, Θηβαῖος, μουσικὸς («Antigenides, son of Satyrus, of Thebes, musician»). See also the first testimony on Christodorus of Coptus: cf. **n. 6, T1**.

¹³²⁸ Cf. Janiszewski 2006, 327.

¹³²⁹ See the introduction.

¹³³⁰ Cf. Van Berkel 1688, 219.

¹³³¹ Cf. 1831, 55.

Περὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς βιβλίοις σημείων: as Kuster explains, the work concerned “*notas criticorum, quales errant obelus, antisigma, diple, ceraunium, & similes*” (1705, 593, n. 3). A work with the same title is attributed to Suetonius.¹³³² As Cuypers noted, the treatise “stands in a tradition which is at least as old as Aristoneikos’ early 1st century AD treatise on Aristarchos’ critical marks in Homeric epics [...], which was still very much alive in late antiquity” (BNJ 474, T1).

Περὶ ποιητικῆς: the title *On Poetry* links the work of Diogenes to a rich tradition. The sources remember many texts indeed on the same topic. Aristoteles’ work is certainly the most famous. Other treatises *περὶ ποιητικῆς* were written by his disciple Theophrastus,¹³³³ the philosopher Speusippus,¹³³⁴ the astronomer Heraclides Ponticus,¹³³⁵ and the rhetor Aristocles of Rhodes.¹³³⁶ Diogenes Laertius also attributes a work *On Poetry* to Crito of Alopece, the friend of Socrates.¹³³⁷

Περὶ στοιχείων: a work with the same title was written by the grammarian M. Mettius Epaphroditus in the first century AD¹³³⁸ and by Apollonius Dyscolus in the second.¹³³⁹ At this point in the entry, Ranke proposed to integrate the text: while studying the entry of the *Suda* concerning the grammarian Diogenianus, the scholar noted that a part of his titles was listed in the nominative, a part in the accusative instead.¹³⁴⁰ To explain the change, Ranke suggested that the last titles of the list came from another entry, namely the one of Diogenes of Cyzicus.¹³⁴¹ For this reason, he proposed to insert them after the *Περὶ στοιχείων*: ἔγραψε [...] Περὶ στοιχείων, Περὶ ποταμῶν κατὰ στοιχεῖον ἐπίτομον ἀναγραφὴν, Συναγωγὴν καὶ πῖνακα τῶν ἐν πάσῃ γῇ πόλεων· καὶ λοιπὰ (“he wrote [...] *On letters, On rivers, harbors, springs, mountains*

¹³³² Cf. *Sud.* τ 895.

¹³³³ Cf. *Diog. Laer.* V 47.

¹³³⁴ Cf. *Simplicius, In Categ.* 36, 25–31.

¹³³⁵ Cf. *Diog. Laer.* V 86.

¹³³⁶ Cf. *Amm. De adfin. voc.* 178, 4.

¹³³⁷ Cf. II 121.

¹³³⁸ Cf. F1 Braswell–Billerbeck.

¹³³⁹ Cf. *Sud.* α 3422.

¹³⁴⁰ Cf. *Sud.* δ 1140; Ranke 1831, 51–53.

¹³⁴¹ Cf. 1831, 55–56.

and mountain ridges; an abridged description – alphabetically ordered – *On rivers*; a *Collection and Table of Cities all around the World*; and others”). As Jacoby already observed, such a correction “hat nichts für sich” (*FGrHist* 474, T1).

F 1

Source date: sixth century AD.

Διογένης ἐν πρώτῃ Κυζίκου φησὶν: the reference to Diogenes’ work comes from Stephanus’ entry on Adrastea.¹³⁴² The abridged form of the title (ἐν πρώτῃ Κυζίκου, “in the first of Cyzicus”) reappears in **F3** too (conversely, **F2** seems to mention only the number of the book without references to the title: see below). Some scholars proposed putting a <περὶ> before it,¹³⁴³ but the correction is not necessary. Indeed, the absence of prepositions in both quotes of the title suggests that the form numeral + Κυζίκου is the one the author (either the epitomist, or Stephanus himself) intended to use. As Cuypers wrote, it likely is a shortening of the title reported by the *Suda* (see above).¹³⁴⁴

ἀπὸ Ἀδραστείας κεκληῖσθαι μιᾷς τῶν Ὀρεστιάδων νυμφῶν: the mention of a mountain nymph by Diogenes is probably related to the mount Adrastea, situated south of Cyzicus.¹³⁴⁵ Already between the end of the first century BC and the beginning of the first AD, Strabo attests the existence of local cults dedicated to a figure with the same name: the geographer observes that περὶ [...] Κύζικον ἔστιν Ἀδραστείας ἱερὸν (“there is a temple of Adrastea near Cyzicus”).¹³⁴⁶ The identification of the recipient of the sanctuary as the nymph quoted by Diogenes is not implausible. The passage of Strabo reveals the connection of the author

¹³⁴² For a deep analysis of it, see *BNJ* 474, F1.

¹³⁴³ See the cautious proposal of Van Berkel (1688, 37), which maintained the text as it is, but showed his difficulty in accepting it. His suggestion was fulfilled by Westermann (1834, 14), Meineke (1849, 28), Mueller (1851, 392), Jacoby (*FGrHist* 474, F1). The same form is implied by Schwartz (1903, 737–738).

¹³⁴⁴ Cf. *BNJ* 474, F1.

¹³⁴⁵ Cf. *BA*, Map 52 A4.

¹³⁴⁶ Cf. XIII 1, 13.

with an older local tradition, likely linked to the myth of Zeus' birth. A part of the mythographic tradition names one of the nymphs nursing Zeus Ἀδραστεία.¹³⁴⁷ As Cuypers pointed out, other references associating the area of Cyzicus to the childhood of god can be found in Agatocles, who dedicated to the topic a section of his Περί Κυζίκου,¹³⁴⁸ and in Apollonius of Rhodes, who linked the site of the city to the cult of Rhea.¹³⁴⁹ It is noteworthy that both Rhea and Adrastea are Greek manifestations of the *Magna Mater*: Cyzicus was supposedly an important center of the Goddess' cults. Diogenes drew inspiration from these local traditions and inserted them in his composition: if the aim of his work was to celebrate his homeland, an adaptation of the myth of Zeus' birth was a good way to achieve it.

F 2

Βέσβικος, νησίδιον περὶ Κύζικον: the “small island” corresponds to the modern *Imralı Adası*, in the Sea of Marmara.¹³⁵⁰ According to Cuypers, “there is no literary or documentary evidence that Besbikos was a dependency of Kyzikos” (*BNJ* 474, F2): but there is a reference in Strabo mentioning the island as νῆσος τῶν Κυζικηνῶν (“island of the Cyziceni”).¹³⁵¹

ὡς Διογένης ὁ Κυζικηνὸς ἐν πρώτῃ, περὶ τῶν ἑπτὰ τῆς πατρίδος νήσων λέγων: the reading of the manuscripts (ἐν πρώτῃ τῶν ἑπτὰ περὶ τῆς πατρίδος νήσων) is quite problematic. In particular, the difficulties involve the meaning of τῶν ἑπτὰ (= ζ) and, consequently, the list of islands reported in the quote. In his edition, Van Berkel interpreted the

¹³⁴⁷ Cf. [Apol.] *Bibl.* 1, 1, 6; *Schol. on Plat. Phaed.* 248c; *Hyg. Fab.* 182.

¹³⁴⁸ Cf. *FGrHist* 472 F1a.

¹³⁴⁹ Cf. I 1092–1192; 1117–1152.

¹³⁵⁰ Cf. Smith 1872, 395. The island is mentioned by the *Periplus* of Ps. Scylax (94, 3), who cites the isthmus of Cyzicus too. As already said, such a note could confirm the idea of Cuypers that the seventh island of **F2** is Cyzicus itself (see below).

¹³⁵¹ Cf. XII 8, 11.

numeral as a reference to the total number of Diogenes' books.¹³⁵² As Müller rightly pointed out, such a translation assumes the existence of a work entirely focused on the islands of Cyzicus, whereas the fragment probably comes from the less specific text quoted in **FF 1** and **3**.¹³⁵³ The idea of a work divided into seven books has been held up by Ranke,¹³⁵⁴ Meineke,¹³⁵⁵ Jacoby,¹³⁵⁶ and Billerbeck.¹³⁵⁷ A different correction has been proposed by Voss, who moved the *περὶ* before the numeral and referred it to the number of islands: *περὶ τῶν ἑπτὰ τῆς πατρίδος νήσων*.¹³⁵⁸ Bernhardt,¹³⁵⁹ Westermann,¹³⁶⁰ Müller¹³⁶¹ and Cuypers¹³⁶² accepted the proposal. Finally, a third interpretation has been suggested by Schwartz: the scholar hypothesized a lacuna after *πρώτη* and interpreted the rest of the passage as a fragment of another author.¹³⁶³ The suggestion is disputable. Before hypothesizing the presence of such a huge lacuna, it is necessary to see if the text can be understood through less intrusive corrections. For this purpose, an examination of the two main possibilities (and of the problems they present) can be useful. There are two arguments at least against the hypothesis of Van Berkel: *in primis*, "indicating the total number of books of a source is contrary to Stephanos' normal practice" (*BNJ* 474, F2); *in secundis*, the "formulae insolentia, ἐν πρώτῃ τῶν ἑπτὰ, cuius ad integritatem requirebatur saltem τῶν εἰς ἑπτὰ" (Bernhardt 1834, *loc. cit.*). The latter aspect is not difficult to pass over: the inaccurate construction can be attributed to a mistake of the copyist, to the summarizing of the epitomist, or directly to the authorship of Stephanus. The former point is more problematic: disregard of Stephanus' *consuetudo* is far more

¹³⁵² Cf. 1688, *loc. cit.*: «in primo septem librorum, quos de patriae suae insulis conscripsit».

¹³⁵³ Cf. *FHG* IV 392.

¹³⁵⁴ Cf. 1831, 55.

¹³⁵⁵ Cf. 1849, 165.

¹³⁵⁶ Cf. *FGrHist* 474, F2.

¹³⁵⁷ Cf. 2011, 342.

¹³⁵⁸ Cf. Westermann 1838, 430, n. 24.

¹³⁵⁹ Cf. 1834, 1378.

¹³⁶⁰ Cf. 1839, 74.

¹³⁶¹ Cf. 1851, 392.

¹³⁶² Cf. *BNJ* 474, F2.

¹³⁶³ Cf. 1903, 737–738.

difficult to explain away than the loss of a preposition. The hypothesis of Voss raises a complication too. The corrected text makes reference to seven islands, but the quote of Diogenes lists just six names. Such a difficulty is not insurmountable: to solve it, scholars have proposed different solutions. The most immediate is the one of Bernhardt, who expunged ἑπτὰ.¹³⁶⁴ The elimination is surely the easiest *escamotage*, but is questionable. If the numeral was not part of the original text, where does it come from? Does it result from the summarizing of the epitomist? If not, is it the addition of a copyist? Neither explanation convinces; because six islands are listed by the fragments, we would expect someone counting them to write “six” rather than “seven”. If he added ἑπτὰ, he must have had a list of seven names in front of him. We would therefore expect what follows to be missing a name. Thus, removing the ἑπτὰ does not solve the problem. Another possible solution can be found in the manuscripts. When listing the islands of Cyzicus, they report the second name in two different forms: one of them (Q = *Vaticanus Palatinus graecus* 253) has Φοίβη; three (R = *Rehdigeranus* 47; P = *Vaticanus Palatinus graecus* 57; N = *Neapolitanus* III. AA. 18) have Φοινίκη instead. In his edition, Jacoby cautiously suggested inserting both names in the text: καὶ Φοίβη καὶ Φοινίκη.¹³⁶⁵ This may be an example of *saut du même au même* (καὶ Φοίβη καὶ Φοινίκη) and a hypothetical solution to the problem of the number of islands. The insertion of both Phoebe and Phoenixe in the fragment of Diogenes would create a list of seven islands. Unfortunately, Jacoby’s hypothesis of a *saut du même au même* cannot be proven, because no codex reports both names in the passage. Moreover, the different names of the islands could be the result of a correction. It is not implausible that a copyist read one version, considered it wrong, and replaced it with the other: this correction would also explain the phonetic proximity of the two alternatives (Φοίβη/Φοινίκη). Other hypothetical solutions were listed by Cuypers: a) it is possible to correct the numeral ζ (=7) into ς (=6); b) to interpret ζ as a part of the title (ἐν πρώτῃ <Κυ>ζ<ίκου>); c) to consider Cyzicus as the seventh island; or d) to add

¹³⁶⁴ 1834, *loc. cit.*

¹³⁶⁵ Cf. *FGrHist* 474 F2.

another name to the fragment's list.¹³⁶⁶ The third and the fourth possibilities can easily be combined: if Cyzicus were the missing island, its name should be in Diogenes' list; the fact that it is not means that it was lost at some point. According to Cuypers, a reference to Cyzicus is the best alternative. Ancient authors such as Pseudo-Scylax,¹³⁶⁷ Apollonius of Rhodes,¹³⁶⁸ Strabo,¹³⁶⁹ and Pliny the Elder¹³⁷⁰ presented Cyzicus as an island. These testimonies do not reflect the actual geography of the area: the site of the ancient city rises up on the tombolo of the *Kapıdağ* peninsula, on the south coast of the Propontis.¹³⁷¹ Nevertheless, they support the hypothesis of Cuypers. Some caveats are necessary, however. The ἑπτὰ preceding Diogenes' fragment was inserted by Stephanus: this means that the author counted seven names when reading his source, and took them all as names of islands. Therefore, if Cyzicus formed part of the list, Stephanus ought to have considered it to be an island. However, the entry of the *Ethnica* concerning the city does not describe it in this way: Κύζικος· πόλις τῆς Προποντίδος κειμένη ἐπὶ χερρονήσῳ. ἐκαλεῖτο δὲ καὶ Ἄρκτων νῆσος ("Cyzicus: city of the Propontis rising up on a peninsula. It used to be called also Arctonnesos").¹³⁷² Cyzicus is presented as a city κειμένη ἐπὶ χερρονήσῳ, "rising up on a peninsula". The ancient name reported by the entry – Ἄρκτων νῆσος, i.e. the *Island of Bears* – is not enough to refute this fact.¹³⁷³ Since Stephanus did not regard Cyzicus as an island,

¹³⁶⁶ Cf. *BNJ* 474, F2.

¹³⁶⁷ Cf. 94, 3.

¹³⁶⁸ Cf. I 936–940.

¹³⁶⁹ Cf. II 5, 23; XII 8, 11; XIV 1, 6.

¹³⁷⁰ Cf. *NH* V 40.

¹³⁷¹ Cf. Drew–Bear 1998. The discrepancy between the sources and the reality has raised the question of whether the *Kapıdağ* was originally an island, later connected to the Anatolian mainland. For an analysis of the problem and the testimonies bearing on it, cf. Hasluck 1910, 1–5.

¹³⁷² Cf. Steph. Byz. s.v. Κύζικος (κ 254 Billerbeck).

¹³⁷³ Stephanus' entry on Peloponnesus confirms that: in spite of its name, the *Island of Pelops* is (rightly) presented as a χερρόνησος ἀμπέλου φύλλῳ τῷ σχήματι παρεμφερής («a peninsula somehow similar to a plant of vine»: cf. s.v. Πελοπόννησος, π 95 Billerbeck). The text has been integrated through the Constantinian excerpts (cf. *De Them. Eur.* VI 14): for that reason, it was expunged by Meineke (1849, 516). Given the connections between the Constantinian excerpts and the *Ethnica*, the expunction is not necessary.

the city cannot be considered part of the list. This difficulty does not, however, argue that the loss of a name is a bad hypothesis: *au contraire*, it remains the best solution to escape from the philological impasse. Determining which name has been lost is not possible: there are many candidates to fill the gap and no textual evidence. The missing element could be the Φοινίκη of Jacoby, for instance, or one of the islands attested by ancient tradition.¹³⁷⁴ Despite this impossibility (or because of it), I would like to suggest a hypothesis. As the entry on Besbicus shows, Diogenes is the source of Stephanus' information about the islands of Cyzicus. The latter makes explicit reference to the former, and quotes *verbatim* a portion of Diogenes' work. Two other passages of the *Ethnica* refer to the same subject: one concerns Ἀλώνη, i.e. the present-day *Paşalimanı*;¹³⁷⁵ the other the mysterious Πολυδώρα, not identified.¹³⁷⁶ Since neither entry mentions a different source, one could link them to the *patria* of Diogenes as well:¹³⁷⁷ indeed, the former island is also mentioned in the fragment on Besbicus. What should one make of the latter? The list does not include it. I suggest that we consider Polydora to be the name missing from the fragment, that is, the seventh island counted by Stephanus. The island is attested in ancient tradition,¹³⁷⁸ and explicitly named in the *Ethnica*.¹³⁷⁹ Once the problem of the ἐπτὰ is solved, nothing prevents our acceptance of Voss' emendation: ὡς Διογένης ὁ Κυζικηνὸς ἐν πρώτῃ, περὶ τῶν ἐπτὰ τῆς

¹³⁷⁴ For instance, one of the ten islands listed by Pliny the Elder (*NH* V 151).

¹³⁷⁵ Cf. Steph. Byz. s.v. Ἀλώνη (α 238 Billerbeck). See the commentary to *BNJ* 474, F2.

¹³⁷⁶ Cf. Steph. Byz. s.v. Πολυδώρα (π 205 Billerbeck).

¹³⁷⁷ Otherwise, one should suppose the existence of another source describing the same subject (= the islands of Cyzicus) and used by the same writer (= Stephanus). Such a hypothesis is not impossible, but is surely less plausible: the islands of Cyzicus were quite a specific topic; moreover, Stephanus does not provide any other name attesting to the use of a different text.

¹³⁷⁸ E.g. by Plin. *NH* V 151.

¹³⁷⁹ I did not insert Πολυδώρα in my critical edition of the fragment for two reasons: on the one hand, the identification of the missing island with Polydora cannot be proven (even if it is a plausible hypothesis); further, it is not possible to determine the missing name's position in the list.

πατρίδος νήσων λέγων.¹³⁸⁰ This correction shows that Diogenes' *patria* did not, as a number of scholars have argued, consist of seven books.¹³⁸¹

Προκόννησος καὶ Φοίβη καὶ Ἀλώνη καὶ Φυσία καὶ Ὀφιοῦσσα καὶ Βέσβικος: the only *wörtlich* fragment of Diogenes reveals his work to be in prose.¹³⁸² This aspect is of great importance to understanding the formal features of late antique *patria*.¹³⁸³ The list of names reported by Stephanus finds a parallel in Pliny the Elder, who locates ten islands in the Marmara Sea.¹³⁸⁴ The first one, Προκόννησος, is identified with the modern *Marmara Adası*, the largest island of the Propontis; Pliny attributes three names to it: *Proconnesus*, *Elaphonnesus*, and *Neuris*.¹³⁸⁵ The manuscripts report the second name in two different forms, i.e. Φοίβη and Φοινίκη: as already seen, Jacoby suggested inserting both names into his edition of the fragment (see above). The majority of the scholars preferred the former reading.¹³⁸⁶ This decision is confirmed by the position of Φοινίκη: it is placed near Tenedus, the famous Trojan island, out of the Propontis and the territory of Cyzicus.¹³⁸⁷ The island of Φοίβη (*Phoebe* in Pliny) has not been identified: Cuypers proposed placing it “off the north-west coast of Paşalimanı/Halone” (*BNJ* 474, F2). Less problematic is the identification of Ἀλώνη (see above). Φυσία is not mentioned in the passage of Pliny: it corresponds to the Turkish *Avşa*. Ὀφιοῦσσα (*Ophiussa* in the *NH*) is the modern *Ekinlik*.¹³⁸⁸

¹³⁸⁰ Ranke 1831, *loc. cit.* included the genitive νήσων in the quote of Diogenes («νήσων» λέγων «Προκόννησος κτλ.»), but his hypothesis is scarcely defensible: as Bernhardt 1834, *loc. cit.* noted, such a use of λέγων is quite strange for Stephanus.

¹³⁸¹ It is not possible to determine the precise number of Diogenes' books: the fragment on Zeleia reveals that they were at least three (ὡς Διογένης ἐν τρίτῃ Κυζίκου).

¹³⁸² Cf. *FGrHist* 474, F2.

¹³⁸³ See the general introduction (§ 2).

¹³⁸⁴ Cf. *NH* V 151.

¹³⁸⁵ Cf. *BNJ* 474, F2.

¹³⁸⁶ Holstein (1692, 65) is the only editor inserting Φοινίκη in the text.

¹³⁸⁷ Cf. Van Berkel 1688, *loc. cit.*

¹³⁸⁸ Cf. *BNJ* 474, F2.

γόνιμοι καὶ λιπαράι: Van Berkel considered the pair of adjectives as the last islands on the list,¹³⁸⁹ but his interpretation was rightly refuted by Holstein.¹³⁹⁰ The same couple of words is attested twice in John Chrysostom.¹³⁹¹ Such a use makes Cuypers hypothesize that Diogenes was inspired by the writings of the Church Father.¹³⁹² The idea is difficult to sustain: as the same scholar observes, the adjectives are used in the *Homeric Questions* of Heraclitus too,¹³⁹³ far earlier than the activity of Chrysostom (first century AD). The scholar is right in pointing out the idealized representation of Diogenes: as she writes, none of them “are or were particularly fertile” (2015, F2). Such a points exemplifies the idealistic tendencies of *patria*.¹³⁹⁴

F 3

Ζέλεια, πόλις Τρωάδος: the site of the ancient Zeleia rises near the modern *Sarıköy*, in the valley of the Aesepus.¹³⁹⁵ Before quoting Diogenes, Stephanus recalls passages of Homer,¹³⁹⁶ Posidippus,¹³⁹⁷ and Herodian.¹³⁹⁸

ἔστι καὶ Ζέλεια φρούριον Κυζίκου: the Ζέλεια of Diogenes is supposed to be different from the Homeric city. This is probably a mistake of Stephanus:¹³⁹⁹ as Cuypers wrote, “it is inconceivable that Diogenes, a man of the region and a scholar, thought that the Kyzikenan fort was not the same place as Homer’s Zeleia” (*BNJ* 474, F3).¹⁴⁰⁰ That it

¹³⁸⁹ Cf. 1688, *loc. cit.*

¹³⁹⁰ Cf. 1692, 65–66.

¹³⁹¹ Cf. *Serm. on Gen.* 53, 77, 9; *De virg.* 80, 17 Grillet – Musurillo.

¹³⁹² *BNJ* 474, *Bibl. Ref.*

¹³⁹³ Cf. 39, 5.

¹³⁹⁴ See the general introduction (§ 2).

¹³⁹⁵ Cf. Hasluck 1910, 101–103.

¹³⁹⁶ Cf. *Il.* II 824.

¹³⁹⁷ Cf. F 148 Austin–Bastianini.

¹³⁹⁸ Cf. II 515–517.

¹³⁹⁹ Cf. *FGrHist* 474, F3.

¹⁴⁰⁰ Stephanus probably made a similar mistake while presenting Adrastea: he writes indeed that ἔστι καὶ Τρωάδος Ἀδράστεια τόπος, ἀπὸ Ἀδραστείας θυγατρὸς Μελίσσου, τοῦ Ἰδης τῆς πρῶτον βασιλευσάσης ἐν Τροίᾳ, ὡς Χάραξ Ἑλληνικῶν δευτέρᾳ («there is also a place named Adrastea in the Troad: [it

belonged to the territory of Cyzicus is already attested by a Hellenistic boundary stone¹⁴⁰¹ and by Strabo.¹⁴⁰²

ὥς Διογένης ἐν τρίτῃ Κυζίκου: for a discussion of the title used by Stephanus, cf. **F1**.

takes its name] from Adrastea, the daughter of Ida's son Melissus; Ida was the first to rule in Troy, as Charax says in the second book of his *Ellenica*». Cf. s.v. Ἀδράστεια, α 64 Billerbeck). As Cuypers hypothesized, Charax's quote refers to the same city presented by Diogenes and the earlier authors. The historian moved it towards west and place it in the original Troas. Stephanus misunderstood his text and though him to present a second center (cf. *BNJ* 474, F1).

¹⁴⁰¹ Cf. Hasluck 1910, 103.

¹⁴⁰² Cf. XII 8, 11; XIII 1, 5.

9.

HERMIAS OF HERMOPOLIS

(*FGrHist* 638; *BNJ* 638)

Introduction

The only testimony concerning Hermias of Hermopolis and his poetic production comes from Photius' *Bibliotheca* (cf. **T1**). Once he has concluded the summary of Helladius' *Chrestomathia*, the Patriarch notes that the volume containing it also includes other works: Hermias' *Patria of Hermopolis* is one of them. The passage does not provide much more information: it just reports that the poem has been written in the meter of Helladius' *corpus*, i.e. in iambics. In order to integrate such a scanty testimony, Müller identified the poet of Hermopolis with a namesake praised by Plutarch.¹⁴⁰³ The identification was rejected by Jacoby, who placed the writing of the *patria* in the second half of the fourth century AD.¹⁴⁰⁴ A late antique dating was also proposed by Keydell: he considered Hermias a "Nachfolger" of the anonymous author of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 (the hypothetical *patria* of Hermopolis: cf. **n. 4**) and dated him either to the fourth, or to the fifth century AD.¹⁴⁰⁵ The studies of Hammerstaedt and Kaster agreed in substance: the former dated all the authors included in Photius' manuscript to the fourth century AD;¹⁴⁰⁶ the latter suggested identifying Hermias either as the namesake addressed by Isidore of Pelusium, or as a witness to a lease named by a papyrus of Hermopolis.¹⁴⁰⁷ None of these hypotheses can be proven: the wide diffusion of the name Hermias in Egypt does not help. Given the nature of his work and the composition of the codex containing it, a dating between the fourth and the fifth centuries AD remains the best option.

¹⁴⁰³ Cf. *Mor.* 365e; cf. *FHG* II 81; IV 427.

¹⁴⁰⁴ Cf. 1913, 731.

¹⁴⁰⁵ Cf. 1936, 467.

¹⁴⁰⁶ Cf. 1997, 105–116.

¹⁴⁰⁷ Cf. 1997, 291, n. 71. See Isid. *Ep.* III 350; *BGU* 12, 2152.

Testimonia

1. Phot. *Bibl.* cod. 279 (536a, 8–10)

ἐν δὲ τῷ αὐτῷ τεύχει τῷ αὐτῷ περιείχετο μέτρῳ καὶ Ἑρμείου
Ἑρμουπολίτου πάτριά τε τῆς Ἑρμουπόλεως καὶ ἕτερα τινά.

In the same volume – written in the same meter – are included also
Hermias of Hermopolis' *Patria of Hermopolis* and some other works.

Commentary

T 1

Source date: ninth century AD.

ἐν δὲ τῷ αὐτῷ τεύχει: the *Patria of Hermopolis* was included in codex 279 of Photius' *Bibliotheca*.¹⁴⁰⁸ Along with the poems of Hermias, the volume contained a composite series of works: 1) the *Chrestomathy* of Helladius of Antinopolis (Ἑλλαδίου Βησαντινίου [...] πραγματεῖαι χρηστομαθειῶν), which provided learned notes on various topics and was divided into four books. The structure and the contents of the treatise are extensively reported by Photius,¹⁴⁰⁹ who also gives some information about the author: he was a pagan, lived under the reigns of Maximianus (285–305 AD) and Licinius (308–324 AD), and wrote speeches on different topics;¹⁴¹⁰ 2) δράματα διάφορα of the grammarian Serenus;¹⁴¹¹ as Hammerstaedt noted, “mit δρᾶμα und seinen Ableitungen bezeichnet Photios sonst niemals “Dramen” im Sinne von “Theaterstücken”” (1997, 109); he probably refers to poetic pieces in the form of dialogue instead;¹⁴¹² 3) a writing addressed by the curial Andronicus of Hermopolis to his fellow citizen the count Phoebammon (Ἀνδρονίκου πολιτευομένου, καὶ αὐτοῦ Ἑρμοπολίτου, πρὸς τὸν κόμητα Φοιβάμμωνα τὸν κοινοπολιστήν): Photius defines the poet as an author of δράματα, and says that he wrote speeches διαφόροις μέτροις (“in different meters”);¹⁴¹³ 4) Horapollon's *Περὶ τῶν πατρῶν Ἀλεξανδρείας* (cf. **n. 10, T2**); 5) a work of Cyrus of Antaeopolis, addressed to Μαυρίκιον δοῦκα: as Photius highlights, this literary πόνος was written

¹⁴⁰⁸ Cf. Cod. 529b, 25–536a, 22.

¹⁴⁰⁹ Cf. *Bibl.* 529b, 25–535b, 39.

¹⁴¹⁰ Cf. *Bibl.* 535b, 39–536a 7 = *FGrHist* 635, T1. See Heimannsfeld 1911; Gudeman 1912; Seeck 1912; Richtsteig 1929; Fornaro 2005; Janiszewski 2006, 253–258; Miguélez Caverio 2008, 80; Cameron 2016, 170.

¹⁴¹¹ Cf. *Bibl.* 536a 10–11 = *BNJ* 1082, T2. Cf. *PLRE* 1, 826 (‘Serenus 2’). See also Kaster 1997, 354 (n. 134); Miguélez Caverio 2008, 80–81; von Arnim 1923; von Rohden 1893.

¹⁴¹² Cf. Hammerstaedt 1997, 109–111.

¹⁴¹³ Cf. *Bibl.* 536a 11–15. See Seeck 1894; Gigli Piccardi 1990, 60–63; Miguélez Caverio 2008, 81; Cameron 2016, 6, 17–18.

in iambics (έν ἰαμβικῷ [...] μέτρῳ).¹⁴¹⁴ The patriarch concludes his presentation by mentioning the letters and the eulogistic speeches of Cyrus.¹⁴¹⁵ The works grouped in the codex are certainly various: Photius mentions an encyclopedic miscellany, two texts on local antiquities, an encomiastic composition, and other works whose nature is difficult to determine. As Crisci demonstrated, miscellaneous codices destined for erudite persons were quite common in late antiquity: the volume of Photius could have been one of them.¹⁴¹⁶ According to Hammerstaedt, its composite selection is due to the common context of the authors, i.e. fourth-century Egypt.¹⁴¹⁷ For the geographical provenance, the hypothesis looks convincing: Helladius came from Antinopolis, Horapollon from the Panopolitan nome, Hermias and Andronicus from nearby Hermopolis; Cyrus was a citizen of Antaeopolis, i.e. the modern *Qaw El Kebir*.¹⁴¹⁸ The grammarian Serenus is the only author without an explicit connection to Upper or Middle Egypt, but it is not difficult to hypothesize that he belonged to the same area. The question of the dating is more problematic. Just two poets can safely be placed in the fourth century AD, namely Helladius and Andronicus: the former – as Photius writes – lived under the Tetrarchy; the latter was a friend of Libanius and a pupil of Themistius.¹⁴¹⁹ The chronology of the others is less clear: the dating of Cyrus depends on the identification of the *dux* Maurice, those of Hermias and Serenus are completely obscure.¹⁴²⁰ They

¹⁴¹⁴ Cf. *Bibl. cod.* 536°, 17–22.

¹⁴¹⁵ Cf. Seeck 1924; Kaster 1997, 265 (n. 41); Miguélez Caverio 2008, 82–83.

¹⁴¹⁶ Cf. 2004, 139–141. See also Miguélez Caverio 2008, 79–80.

¹⁴¹⁷ Cf. 1997, 116.

¹⁴¹⁸ Cf. Pietschmann 1894; Gwyn Griffiths 1970, 305; Beinlich 1984.

¹⁴¹⁹ Cf. *Lib. Ep.* 77, 1.

¹⁴²⁰ The emperor Maurice is surely the most famous namesake of the mysterious *dux*, but «he does not coincide with the dating of the rest of the works in the codex» (Miguélez Caverio 2008, 82). Another possibility was proposed by Viljamaa (1968, 30), who made reference to a fourth-century tribune mentioned by Ammianus (XXXV 8, 7). As an alternative, the Greek titles of Maurice (δοῦξ καὶ ἡγεμῶν) could refer to the imperial office of the *dux et augustalis Thebaidos*: since this role is not attested before 538/9 AD, the addressee of Cyrus' work must be dated after that date (cf. *PLRE* IIIB, 861 ['Mauricius 5']; Miguélez Caverio 2008, *l.c.*). A *Fl. Mauricius v(ir) c(larissimus) com(es) et dux* is mentioned by an inscription of Syene (written between 367 and 375 AD: cf. *PLRE* I, 570 ['Fl. Mauricius 2'], and Baldwin 1982, 104–106).

could be dated to the fourth century like the others, but nothing establishes it. Even the chronology of Horapollon is not unproblematic.¹⁴²¹ In spite of these difficulties, the hypothesis of Hammerstaedt is a valid possibility: it is the only possible way to attribute a chronology to Hermias' *patria*.

τῷ αὐτῷ [...] μέτρῳ: i.e. in iambic meter. The metrical choice is quite interesting. As Miguélez Caveró noted, late antique poetry is characterized by the triumph of the hexameter to the detriment of the other meters – of the iamb in particular: “the hexameter, so characteristic of the epic, started to gain ground [...] because of its association with grandeur, but also because of its definition as ‘generic meter’” (2008, 106).¹⁴²² In spite of this general tendency, the majority of the works included in Photius' volume were written in iambs. In order to understand the meaning of that, we have to note that decrease is not the equivalent of disappearance. Iambs were supplied by hexameters in many compositions, but never disappeared: just to give two examples, Gregory of Nazianzus wrote iambic poems,¹⁴²³ and so did his cousin Amphilochus.¹⁴²⁴ In addition, it is necessary to remark that “our view is certainly skewed by the loss of a number of texts” (Agosti 2001, 222). In other words, the decline of iambic poetry should not be overestimated. If all these elements are not taken into account, Photius' codex risks being reduced to a metrical anomaly. On the contrary, it can be perfectly

Another solution was suggested by Hammerstaedt 1997, 114–116: he separated the δοῦξ (Maurice) from the ἡγεμών. In identifying the latter with the Latin *praeses*, the scholar dated everything to the fourth century AD. The sources name other namesakes, but their identification with Cyrus' addressee is difficult to sustain: cf. Miguélez Caveró 2008, 82–83.

¹⁴²¹ See the introduction to **n. 10**.

¹⁴²² The situation changed in Byzantine time, when the evolution of Greek made the hexameter difficult to understand. Poets found the iamb more adapt to the new situation, and started using it more than the traditional epic verse (cf. Cameron 2016, 13–14). Such a change is perfectly exemplified by the activity of Marianus of Eleutheropolis (late fifth century AD/early sixth): as the testimony of the *Suda* (μ 194) notes, he translated in iambs the hexametric works of Theocritus, Apollonius, Callimachus, and other poets (cf. Geffcken 1930).

¹⁴²³ E.g. *Carm.* I 2, 25; 27; 28; 35; II 1, 11; 12; 40; 41 (cf. Agosti 2001, 229–233; Hawkins 2014, 142–185).

¹⁴²⁴ See the *Iambi ad Seleucum*: cf. Oberg 1969.

integrated into the Greek tradition, which considered the iambus the correct meter for didactic, technical and moral poetry.¹⁴²⁵ A brief examination of the contained works demonstrates it. The erudite nature of Helladius' *Chrestomathy* is revealed by the summary of Photius. For the texts of Andronicus and Cyrus, the situation is a bit more difficult. Cameron noted that the production of iambic *encomia* as early as the fourth century AD is indeed quite surprising: a later dating (i.e. around the sixth century AD) would be more reliable.¹⁴²⁶ To solve the impasse, he suggested two possibilities: "either iambic *encomia* were a short-lived vogue [...]; or Photius was misled by the common practice of prefacing hexameter poems with comic iambic prologues addressing the circumstances of recitation and did not read any further" (2016, *loc. cit.*). Some remarks are necessary. First, it is not possible to demonstrate that the works of Andronicus and Cyrus were encomiums: Photius does not define them so (whereas he makes reference to ἐγκώμια in other passages of the *Bibliotheca*).¹⁴²⁷ He just says that those works were addressed to the count Phoebammon and to the duke Maurice. Second, even if they were encomiums (or – more generally – texts of a eulogistic nature), the dating is not sure: as already said, the chronology of Andronicus depends on that of Maurice, and the fourth century is not the only possibility (see above). Finally, even if both texts were encomiums of the fourth century, the use of iambic meter would not be against the *consuetudo*: since the time of Aristotle, epideictic literature had a strong moral and didactic function;¹⁴²⁸ therefore, the choice of an iambic meter is not completely out of context. The lack of testimonies about iambic encomiums before George of Pisidia (seventh century AD) does not necessarily mean that this kind of product was not written: as already said, it could simply be due to the loss of material. Along with the *Chrestomathia* of Helladius and the encomiastic works of Andronicus and Cyrus, even the *patria* of Hermias and Horapollon can be inserted into the same tradition: the narration of foundation myths, along with the interest in ancient traditions, linked them to this erudite production.

¹⁴²⁵ Cf. Agosti 2001, 219–224.

¹⁴²⁶ Cf. 2016, 14.

¹⁴²⁷ E.g. codd. 159 (102a, 12–13), 160 (102b, 32), 171 (118a, 34), 262 (488b, 24).

¹⁴²⁸ Cf. Hauser 1999.

To summarize, the metrical choices of Helladius, Hermias, Horapollon, Andronicus, and Cyrus need not surprise us: they are in line with Greek literary practices. Little can be said about the other δράματα. Photius does not provide information about them, but they likely belonged to the same tradition. If they did not, the situation would not be tragic: as already remarked, the practice of iambs – mainly applied to didactic, technical, and moral works – could have been more widespread than the state of the sources reveals.¹⁴²⁹

περιείχετο [...] καὶ Ἑρμείου Ἑρμουπόλιτου πάτριά τε τῆς Ἑρμουπόλεως: for further information about Hermopolis Magna, see the commentary to *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481 (= n. 4). For the identity of Hermias, the scholars have proposed different solutions. The hypothesis of Müller, who provided a list of namesakes and cautiously proposed a link with the Ἑρμαῖος named by Plutarch¹⁴³⁰ is not convincing.¹⁴³¹ The author wrote a book *On Egyptian Festivals* (Περὶ τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ἑορτῶν) and supposedly lived between the first century BC and the first century AD:¹⁴³² the early dating makes the attribution of *patria* quite difficult. More reliable is the hypothesis of Kaster, who proposed two alternative options.¹⁴³³ On the one hand, he suggested identifying Hermias with an addressee of Isidore of Pelusium.¹⁴³⁴ On the other hand, he made reference to the grammarian (?) "Fl(avius) Er..., son of ...philos" (Φλ(άυιος) Ἐρ[---]φίλου), listed by a papyrus of Hermopolis between the witnesses to a lease:¹⁴³⁵ the name of the poet could hide behind the lacuna (Φλ(άυιος) Ἐρ[μείου]). The former hypothesis would place the activity of Hermias between the late fourth century AD and the first half of the fifth: Isidore of Pelusium was born around 360 AD and died after

¹⁴²⁹ See, for instance, the use of iambs in some narrative sections of the Alexander romance: cf. Agosti 2001, 221; Hawkins 2014, 97.

¹⁴³⁰ Cf. *Mor.* 365e.

¹⁴³¹ Cf. *FHG* II 81.

¹⁴³² Cf. *FGrHist* 620 = BNJ 638; see Jacoby 1912.

¹⁴³³ Cf. 1997, 289–291.

¹⁴³⁴ Cf. *Ep.* III 350: Ἑρμεία γραμματικῶ («to the grammarian Hermias»).

¹⁴³⁵ Cf. *BGU* 12, 2152, 17. The papyrus reads Φλ(άυιος) Ἐρ[---]φίλου γρα[. . μ]αρτυρῶ: the restoration γρα[μμ(ατικός)] was proposed by Mähler. As the scholar noted, the text makes reference to a third witness, namely Flavius Pythiodorus, and presents him as a grammarian (cf. *BGU* 12, *loc. cit.*).

433.¹⁴³⁶ Since the contract of Hermopolis was redacted in the second half of the fifth century AD,¹⁴³⁷ the identification of Hermias with the witness to the lease would move the date a bit later. In spite of their reliability, both possibilities raise some difficulties. As Kaster himself noted, Photius does not specify that Hermias was a grammarian, whereas Serenus is explicitly presented as a γραμματικός.¹⁴³⁸ Moreover, identifying the mysterious Φλ(άυιος) Ἐρ[with Hermias is not the only possibility at our disposal: the grammarian Heraclammon – who spent some years in Hermopolis after 391 – could be another good candidate.¹⁴³⁹ Beyond these specific observations, a major problem was pointed out by Janiszewski: the references to the addressee of Isidore, or to the Egyptian witness are exclusively based on the homonymy between those figures and the author of the *patria*.¹⁴⁴⁰ Unfortunately, the popularity of the name Ἑρμείας in late antique Egypt (especially in the area of Hermopolis)¹⁴⁴¹ makes this argument questionable.

καὶ ἕτερά τινα: it is not clear whether Photius refers to other *patria*, or more generically to other works. Miguélez Caverio interpreted it as a reference to “other iambic poems”. Both possibilities are plausible.¹⁴⁴²

¹⁴³⁶ See **n. 7** (F 1, n. 22).

¹⁴³⁷ Cf. *BGU* 12, *loc. cit.* for a discussion of the possible dating.

¹⁴³⁸ Cf. 1997, 291.

¹⁴³⁹ Cf. Kaster 1997, 290.

¹⁴⁴⁰ Cf. 2006, 315.

¹⁴⁴¹ Cf. Janiszewski 2006, 315.

¹⁴⁴² Cf. 1997, 80.

10.

HORAPOLLON OF PHENEBYTHIS

(FGrHist 630; BNJ 630)

Introduction

Among all the authors edited in this collection, Horapollon is one of the most problematic (if not the most problematic of all). His *Patria of Alexandria* are mentioned by the *Bibliotheca* of Photius (cf. **T2**), who cites them soon after Hermias' *Patria of Hermopolis* (see **n. 9**). According to the patriarch, Horapollon's text was followed by other δράματα. The testimony raises three main questions: first, who Horapollon was; second, when he wrote the *patria* of Alexandria; third, whether he composed *patria* of that city or a different kind of work. These three queries require an answer.

For the first problem, the rarity of the name Horapollon comes to our rescue. Ancient sources mention just three namesakes.¹⁴⁴³ Two of them are listed by the *Suda* (cf. **T1**): the former is a grammarian from Phenebythis, who flourished under the emperor Theodosius (the encyclopedia does not say whether the first or the second); the latter is a Neoplatonic philosopher, who lived under the emperor Zeno (474–491 AD). The third Horapollon is the mysterious author of the Ἱερογλυφικά, the Greek treatise on Egyptian hieroglyphics.¹⁴⁴⁴ These three candidates were likely connected to each other. The convincing analysis of Maspéro has shown that the grammarian Horapollon was the grandfather of the philosopher.¹⁴⁴⁵ Son of the former and father of the latter was Asclepiades, teacher in Alexandria and scholar of Egyptian

¹⁴⁴³ A fourth namesake is mentioned by *P. Bodl.* 1, 73, 3, 10 as a sixth-century AD inhabitant of the Herakliopolite nome (cf. Wildish 2018, 12.). The absence of references to his literary (or scholarly) career and the late dating make the identification with our author quite implausible.

¹⁴⁴⁴ For an introduction to the work, see the critical editions of Sbordone 1940 (= 2002, esp. XVII–LXVI) and Thissen 2001. See also the study of Wildish 2018.

¹⁴⁴⁵ Cf. Maspéro 1911, esp. 174–182. The hypothesis was accepted by later scholars: see, for instance, Kaster 1988, 294–297; Janiszewski 2006, 318–319; Miguélez Cavero 2008, 7–10; *BNJ* 630, T1.

lore.¹⁴⁴⁶ As regards the third Horapollon, his identification with the Neoplatonic namesake is highly plausible.¹⁴⁴⁷ This element narrows down the list of possibilities. Analyzing Photius' citation, scholars interpreted it differently. Whereas Caprara,¹⁴⁴⁸ Sbordonè,¹⁴⁴⁹ and Janiszewski¹⁴⁵⁰ attributed the *Patria of Alexandria* to the first Horapollon, Maspéro,¹⁴⁵¹ Cameron,¹⁴⁵² the redactors of the *PLRE*,¹⁴⁵³ Moffatt,¹⁴⁵⁴ and Jerkins¹⁴⁵⁵ opted for the second one. Intermediate is the position of Jacoby: he collected testimonies concerning both Ὠραπόλλωνες, referring the corpus to "Horapollon (von Phenebythis oder Neilopolis)".¹⁴⁵⁶ Kaster followed him.¹⁴⁵⁷ A different possibility was suggested by Hammerstaedt, who attributed the *patria* to the younger Horapollon and the other δράματα to the elder.¹⁴⁵⁸

I argue that the elder Horapollon is the author of the *Patria of Alexandria*. Several elements support the attribution. First of all, the form of Photius' quote (Ὠραπόλλωνος γραμματικοῦ). As witnessed by the *Suda*, the elder Horapollon achieved great success as a grammarian, whereas his grand-son was mostly famous for his philosophical activity (cf. **T1**). One could reasonably suppose that Photius would have spoken of a "philosopher Horapollon", had his codex attributed the *Patria of Alexandria* to Asclepiades' son.¹⁴⁵⁹ But there is something more. Along with Horapollon, Photius quotes the poet Andronicus of Hermopolis: in doing so, he presents him as "the curial Andronicus" (Ἀνδρονίκου

¹⁴⁴⁶ *FGrHist* 624 = *BNJ* 624; see Kaster 1988, 244–245; *PLRE* II, 158–159 ('Asclepiades 2').

¹⁴⁴⁷ See the commentary to **T1**.

¹⁴⁴⁸ Cf. 1998, 8; 22–23.

¹⁴⁴⁹ Cf. 2002, XXXII.

¹⁴⁵⁰ Cf. 2006, 321–322.

¹⁴⁵¹ Cf. 1918, 177.

¹⁴⁵² Cf. 1965, 492.

¹⁴⁵³ Cf. *PLRE* II, 570 ('Fl. Horapollon 2').

¹⁴⁵⁴ Cf. 1990, 97, n. 3.

¹⁴⁵⁵ Cf. *BNJ* 2014, T 3

¹⁴⁵⁶ Cf. *FGrHist* 630.

¹⁴⁵⁷ Cf. 1988, 294–297.

¹⁴⁵⁸ Cf. 1997, 112. Although not impossible, the hypothesis is quite risky: how can we determine that the *patria* were written by the philosopher and the rest by his grand-father? The contrary would have been possible as well.

¹⁴⁵⁹ Cf. Steph. *Ethn.* s.v. Φενέβηθις (φ 49 Billerbeck). See the commentary to **T1**.

πολιτευομένου).¹⁴⁶⁰ As this reference reveals, Photius' volume reported the official titles of the authors it contained. One should wonder why it did not attribute anything to the philosopher Horapollon, who presented himself as a *vir clarissimus* in official documents.¹⁴⁶¹ Even the nature of Horapollon's work supports our identification: the celebration of a Greek city such as Alexandria fits better the activity of a Greek-focused grammarian than that of a syncretistic Neoplatonic philosopher.¹⁴⁶²

Having attributed the *Patria of Alexandria* to the elder Horapollon, we must determine under which Theodosius he wrote it. As already said, the *Suda* does not specify whether he was the first or the second one. Even in this case, scholars proposed different solutions: Jacoby¹⁴⁶³ and Cameron¹⁴⁶⁴ dated Horapollon to the reign of Theodosius the Great (379–395 AD); Maspero,¹⁴⁶⁵ Rémondon,¹⁴⁶⁶ Kaster,¹⁴⁶⁷ Caprara,¹⁴⁶⁸ Masson,¹⁴⁶⁹ and Wildish¹⁴⁷⁰ thought of Theodosius II instead

¹⁴⁶⁰ About Andronicus of Hermopolis, see the commentary to **n. 9, T1**.

¹⁴⁶¹ Cf. *P. Cair. Masp.* 3, 67295, 1, 1: [το]ῦ λαμπροτάτου. About the reliability of the information, see Kaster 1988, 295. About the papyrus, see the commentary to **T1**. As regards the authors collected by Photius' codex, they could provide further evidence to support our hypothesis. As already said, Hammerstaedt (1997, 116) referred them to the fourth-century Egypt: if his idea were correct, the elder Horapollon would be a better candidate for the identification than the younger namesake. Since, however, Hammerstaedt's hypothesis cannot be confirmed (see the commentary to **n. 9, T1**), it cannot be used to determine Horapollon's identity.

¹⁴⁶² Another interesting element could be provided by the *Suda*: having referred a series of works to the elder grammarian, the encyclopedia does not attribute any writing to the younger philosopher (cf. **T1**). It must be noted, though, that the absence of titles does not necessarily mean that the younger Horapollon did not write anything: the list of his works could have gone lost; otherwise, the author of the entry could have been not aware of them. If the philosopher Horapollon were the author of the Ἱερογλυφικά, that would explain the absence of the work in his entry.

¹⁴⁶³ Cf. *FGrHist* 630, T1.

¹⁴⁶⁴ Cf. 1965, 488.

¹⁴⁶⁵ Cf. 1911, 176.

¹⁴⁶⁶ Cf. 1952, 64.

¹⁴⁶⁷ Cf. 1988, 294.

¹⁴⁶⁸ Cf. 1998, 20–23.

¹⁴⁶⁹ Cf. 1992, 231–235.

¹⁴⁷⁰ Cf. 2018, *loc. cit.*

(408–450 AD).¹⁴⁷¹ I would identify the emperor of the *Suda* with Arcadius' son. The philosopher Horapollon lived at the end of the fifth century (cf. **T1**): if we placed his namesake at the end of the fourth, grand-father and grand-son would be separated by almost a century. Such a gap is too long to be plausible. Horapollon's moving from Alexandria to Constantinople is easily comprehensible during the reign of Theodosius II: Constantine's city was at that point the real center of the Roman east.¹⁴⁷²

The last problem we have to face involves the nature of Horapollon's work. Up to now, I have named it *Patria of Alexandria*. Yet, the title provided by Photius is slightly different: the patriarch quotes Horapollon's *Περὶ τῶν πατρίων Ἀλεξανδρείας*, "On the *patria* of Alexandria" (cf. **T2**). Does the different heading reveal a different kind of work? In order to answer the question, we have to verify if Photius has modified it, or not. Against an intervention of the patriarch stands the reference to Hermias' *Πάτρια* [...] τῆς Ἑρμοῦπόλεως (cf. **n. 9, T1**). Photius quotes it just a few lines before Horapollon's work: if he had corrected a hypothetical *Πάτρια τῆς Ἀλεξανδρείας* into the actual *Περὶ τῶν πατρίων Ἀλεξανδρείας*, he would have done the same with Hermias' writing. Since he has not, we must suppose that the title he mentions is the original one (or, at least, that it was the heading reported by the manuscript). If we analyze it, we realize that the differences with from the titles of other *patria* are not so strong. Except for the initial preposition *περί*, the rest is quite normal: the plural neuter *πάτρια* followed by the genitive of *Ἀλεξανδρεία*. In my opinion, this construction shows that we are dealing with *patria* of Alexandria: the late dating of the composition supports the idea.

To conclude, the testimony of Photius and the *Suda* depict a typical exponent of late imperial culture: a grammarian who started his career in his own country and then moved to the center of the Roman east. Mainly working on Greek literary topics (such as the poetry of Homer, Alcaeus, and Sophocles), he also treated antiquarian themes (his *Τεμενικά* corroborate it). His heirs followed in his footsteps and became experts in Egyptian lore. Unlike them, the elder Horapollon supposedly

¹⁴⁷¹ The authors of the *PLRE* do not take position: cf. *PLRE* I, 442 ('Horapollon').

¹⁴⁷² Cf. Grig-Kelly 2012, 12–18.

maintained a Hellenizing focus: the redaction of the *Patria of Alexandria*, a praise of the most prestigious Greek settlement in Egypt, confirms it.

Testimonia

1. Sud. ω 159

Ὡραπόλλων, Φαινεβύθεως, κώμης τοῦ Πανοπολίτου νομοῦ, γραμματικός, διδάξας ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ καὶ ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ, εἶτα ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει ἐπὶ Θεοδοσίου. ἔγραψε Τεμενικά, ὑπόμνημα Σοφοκλέους, Ἀλκαίου, εἰς Ὅμηρον. λαμπρὸς μὲν ἐπὶ τῇ τέχνῃ ἄνθρωπος καὶ τῶν πάλαι λογιμωτάτων γραμματικῶν οὐδὲν τι μεῖον κλέος ἀπενεγκάμενος.

1. Φαινεβύθεως : codd. | Φενεβήθεως Bernhardy (e Stephano) || Πανοπολίτου : A^rSM | Πανοπλίτου G || **2.** ἐν : A^rGM | ἐπὶ S (ter) || καὶ : codd. | τῇ Kuster in app. || **3.** ὑπόμνημα : A^rSM | ὑπομήματα G

Horapollon, of Phenebythis (a village in the Panopolitan nome), grammarian; he taught in Alexandria and in Egypt, then in Constantinople under Theodosius. He wrote *On temples* and commentaries on Sophocles, Alcaeus, and about Homer. The man was famous for his art and won no less glory than the most celebrated grammarians of ancient times.

2. Phot. Bibl. cod. 279 (536a, 15–17)

Ἦτι δὲ καὶ Ὡραπόλλωνος γραμματικοῦ περὶ τῶν πατρῶν Ἀλεξανδρείας· συντίθησι δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς δράματα τῷ ὁμοίῳ τύπῳ.

Moreover, the work of the grammarian Horapollon on the antiquities of Alexandria: he also composed dramas in the same form.

Commentary

T 1

Source date: tenth century AD.

Ἵραπόλλων, Φαινεβύθεως, κώμης τοῦ Πανοπολίτου νομοῦ, γραμματικός: the name of the grammarian reflects the composite religious atmosphere of late antique Egypt. It results from the fusion of the Egyptian Horus with the Greek Apollo. As Eustathius of Thessalonica writes, ὁ Ἵραπόλλων, ἀνὴρ λόγιος, οὗ ἡ σύνθεσις ἐκ τοῦ Ἵηρος καὶ Ἀπόλλων, ἃ καὶ ἄμφω ἐπίθετά εἰσι Φοίβου (“Horapollon, a wise man, whose composition originates from Horus and Apollo: they are both epithets of Phoebus”).¹⁴⁷³ Similar compounds are attested by Plutarch (Ἑρμάνουβις),¹⁴⁷⁴ Eusebius (Ἑρμάμμων),¹⁴⁷⁵ and Sinesius (Φοιβάμμων).¹⁴⁷⁶ The town of Phaenebythis was placed – as the *Suda* notes – in the Panopolitan nome, not far from Ptolemais Hermious (the present-day *el-Mansha*).¹⁴⁷⁷ Ancient sources report its name in different ways: whereas our passage defines Horapollon Φαινεβύθεως, Stephanus of Byzantium dedicates an entry to Φενέβηθις.¹⁴⁷⁸ This passage deserves particular attention. Along with the Egyptian village, it mentions a Horapollon: for this reason, both Jacoby and Jenkins edited it as a testimony on our author.¹⁴⁷⁹ To discuss the editorial choice, let us read the text: Φενέβηθις, πόλις Αἰγύπτου. τὸ ἐθνικὸν τῷ συνήθει χαρακτῆρι Φενεβηθίτης. οὕτως γὰρ Ἵραπόλλων ὁ φιλόσοφος ἐχρημάτιζεν (“Phaenebythis, city of Egypt. The ethnic takes the form Phaenebythes. The philosopher Horapollon was named so”). As it is possible to see, the entry speaks of a philosopher: it does not mention

¹⁴⁷³ Cf. *Comm. Il.* I 689, 16–18.

¹⁴⁷⁴ Cf. *Mor.* 375E 4. The same name is attested in Eus. *Praep. Ev.* III 11, 43, 3; Greg. Naz. *Vit.* 839; Porph. *Stat.* 8, 111.

¹⁴⁷⁵ Cf. *HE* VII 1, 1, 5; 10, 2, 2; 22, 12, 1.

¹⁴⁷⁶ Cf. *Ep.* 144, 1. See also Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 279, 536a, 13 (cf. **n. 9, T1**).

¹⁴⁷⁷ The precise position remains unknown: cf. *BNJ* 630, T2.

¹⁴⁷⁸ Cf. *Ethn.* s.v. Φενέβηθις. The form in eta is used by Herodianus too (cf. *Pros. Cath.* 3, 1, 88, 9).

¹⁴⁷⁹ Cf. *FGrHist* 630, T2; *BNJ* 630, *loc. cit.*

the grammarian, but his grand-son (see below). Jacoby and Jenkins included the testimony in their editions because they aimed to collect material about both Horapollons. Since, in my opinion, the *Patria of Alexandria* should be referred to the elder one, I did not include Stephanus' passage in my collection. Phaenebythis was a toparchy in Roman times: in spite of the official role, it must have kept quite a low profile. Most of the information concerning it comes from papyri and tablets.¹⁴⁸⁰ That two personalities such as the grammarian Horapollon and his grandson could originate from a small provincial town confirms the high cultural development of the late antique Thebaid.

διδάξας ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ καὶ ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ, εἵτα ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει ἐπὶ Θεοδοσίου: the *cursus studiorum* of Horapollon echoes that of many sophists and grammarians of his age. After having taught for a while in his region (ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ καὶ ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ), he moved to the new center of the eastern empire, the Constantinople of Theodosius II.¹⁴⁸¹ The *Patria of Alexandria* could have been written during Horapollon's stay in the Egyptian city. The mention of Constantinople allows the introduction of Horapollon's hypothetical connection with the rhetor Themistius. In his twenty-ninth oration (supposedly performed in Constantinople around 377 AD), Themistius notes: καὶ εἰ μὲν τις οἷός τέ ἐστι ξυντιθέναι τραγωδίαν καὶ ἔπη καὶ διθυράμβους, ὥσπερ ὁ ἔναγχος ἐπιδημήσας Αἰγύπτιος νεανίσκος, ἀλλὰ ἀμαθὴς γε εἶναι ὁμολογεῖ τὴν ὑψηλοτέραν σοφίαν ("even if there is someone here who can compose tragedies, epic verses and dithyrambs like this young Egyptian who has recently come to live here, he must admit that he is ignorant concerning the higher wisdom").¹⁴⁸² As hypothesized by Cameron, the young Egyptian could be Horapollon.¹⁴⁸³ The hypothesis would date his activity to the second half of the fourth century AD, therefore under the reign of Theodosius the Great. Introduced by Cameron as one of the possibilities at our disposal, the

¹⁴⁸⁰ See, for instance, *P. Oxy.* XLIX 3469, 2, 15, 16; *P. Stras.* 6, 587, 8; *P. Mich. inv.* 4219, 1; *P. Got.* 3.3; *T. Mom. Louvre* 246; etc. For the complete list, see *BNJ* 630, *loc. cit.*

¹⁴⁸¹ See the introduction.

¹⁴⁸² Cf. XXIX 347a. About the dating of the oration, see Bouchery 1936, 148, n. 3.

¹⁴⁸³ Cf. 1965, 488.

identification of Horapollon with the Egyptian youth was considered “tempting” by Janiszewski.¹⁴⁸⁴ Two observations must be made: first, the reference to the Egyptian νεανίσκος is too generic to allow any identification. As Cameron himself noted, “he might equally well be any one of a number of such versatile Egyptian poets, of whom our scanty sources leave us in ignorance” (1965, 488). Second, if we date the grammarian Horapollon to the reign of Theodosius the Great, how could he be the grand-father of the other Horapollon? As already said in the introduction, they would be separated by almost a century. For these two reasons, I do not sustain the identification with Themistius’ visitor.

ἔγραψε Τεμενικά, ὑπόμνημα Σοφοκλέους, Ἀλκαίου, εἰς Ὅμηρον: the title of Horapollon’s Τεμενικά (“On Temples”) echoes that of Eugenius’ Περὶ τῶν τεμενικῶν. As the *Suda* witnesses, the latter book dealt with the origin of temple names.¹⁴⁸⁵ One can reasonably suppose that Horapollon’s work focused on the same topic.¹⁴⁸⁶ The commentaries on Sophocles, Alcaeus, and Homer reveal the typical literary interests of an imperial grammarian.

λαμπρὸς μὲν ἐπὶ τῇ τέχνῃ ἄνθρωπος καὶ τῶν πάλαι λογιμωτάτων γραμματικῶν οὐδὲν τι μείον κλέος ἀπενεγκάμενος: the celebration of Horapollon’s fame as a grammarian is followed by the presentation of his grand-son. The two namesakes have been merged in the same entry. The younger Horapollon is better known than his grand-father. Along with literary sources such as Zacharias’ *Life of Severus* and Damascius’ *Life of Isidore*,¹⁴⁸⁷ we have also at our disposal a document of his own hand, which was copied and preserved in the library of Dioscorus of Aphroditon (*P. Cair. Masp.* 3, 67295).¹⁴⁸⁸ The papyrus, which denounces the conjugal troubles of Horapollon, reports his complete name: Flavius

¹⁴⁸⁴ 2006, 320.

¹⁴⁸⁵ Cf. *Sud.* ε 3394: ὅπως προφέρεται: οἶον Διονύσιον, Ἀσκληπίειον («how they are named: e.g. Dionysion, Asclepion»). For an introduction to the grammarian (and some bibliography), see Matthaios 2015, 270–271.

¹⁴⁸⁶ So Jenkins (cf. *BNJ* 630, T1).

¹⁴⁸⁷ For an introduction to the two texts and a critical edition, see Ambjrn 2008 and Athanassiadi 1999. See also the translation of Brock-Fitzgerald 2013.

¹⁴⁸⁸ A critical text of the papyrus is provided by Maspéro 1911, 163–169. For what concerns the library of Dioscorus, see Mac Coull 1988.

Horapollon.¹⁴⁸⁹ It also reveals that he taught as a philosopher in Alexandria.¹⁴⁹⁰ The reference to a philosophical practice has been de-escalated by Kaster, who notes that ““philosopher” and “philosophical” are used in a broad, nontechnical sense” (1988, 295). Such a severe view is disputable. Amateur or not, Horapollon has always been presented as a philosopher by ancient sources: Zacharias Scholasticus defines him as both grammarian and philosopher;¹⁴⁹¹ Stephanus of Byzantium names him ὁ φιλόσοφος (see above); the *Suda* points out that he οὐκ ἦν τὸ ἦθος φιλόσοφος (“was not a philosopher by nature”): such a wry remark would not have made sense, if Horapollon had not been considered a philosopher. He shared his philosophical ambitions with the father Asclepiades, who had spent all his life in Alexandria, devoting it to teaching.¹⁴⁹² *P. Cair. Masp.* 3, 67295 provides other details of Horapollon’s life: in order to maintain the family estates, he married his first cousin. She later abandoned him and escaped with a new lover: in doing so, she stole the furniture from their house in Phaenebythis.¹⁴⁹³ Less gossipy material comes from the writings of Zacharias and Damascius. As already said, the former links Horapollon to a group of Neoplatonic philosophers, who were accused of practicing magic and forbidden to teach at the end of the fifth century AD.¹⁴⁹⁴ The latter narrates that he was arrested and tortured during the persecutions of pagans under Zeno.¹⁴⁹⁵ The entry of the *Suda* refers to the same episode: having described the arrest of Horapollon and his fellow Heraiscus, the

¹⁴⁸⁹ Cf. II 24.

¹⁴⁹⁰ Cf. *P. Cair. Masp.* 3, 67295, I 13–14.

¹⁴⁹¹ Cf. Zach. Schol. *VS* 14, 2; 15, 4–10. The historian provides a further confirmation: he says indeed that Horapollon was mocked by one of his pupils along with the Neoplatonists Asclepiodotus, Heraiscus, Ammonius, and Isidore (cf. *VS* 15, 10–11). To the eyes of the student, Horapollon must have been a Neoplatonic philosopher like the others. The bad episode was not without consequences: the mocking student was beaten by other schoolmates; for this reason, he brought Horapollon and the other philosophers in front of the prefect. Since this last was a secret pagan, he made the accused escape. At that point, the Christian population cursed Horapollon, naming him Ψυχαπόλλων, «destroyer of souls».

¹⁴⁹² Cf. Kaster 1988, 244–245.

¹⁴⁹³ Cf. *P. Cair. Masp.* 3, 67295, I 28–9, II 4–7.

¹⁴⁹⁴ Cf. Zach. Schol. *VS* 14–16, 22–3.

¹⁴⁹⁵ Cf. *Vit. Isid.* FF 314, 317 Zintzen.

text announces the following conversion of the former to Christianity. The frequent mention of Horapollon along with the philosopher Heraiscus has convinced some scholars that the latter was the uncle of the former: in other words, that Heraiscus was the brother of Asclepiades and the son of the elder Horapollon.¹⁴⁹⁶ As Miguélez Caverio noted, the identification can be argued.¹⁴⁹⁷ The *Suda* does not attribute any work to the younger Horapollon: as already mentioned in the introduction, the absence of titles could be due to the loss of a portion of text; otherwise, it could simply mean that the Sudaist did not know any writing of the philosopher. This aspect allows me to introduce another problem of Horapollon's fragments, namely their connection with the author of Ἱερογλυφικά. As I already said in the introduction, the treatise on Egyptian hieroglyphs was written by a mysterious Horapollon Nilous. Nothing is known about the author; his text does not provide many elements to suggest a dating.¹⁴⁹⁸ In order to determine the relationship of this writer with the two namesakes listed by the *Suda*, some preliminary observations are necessary. The first involves the name of the author as it is reported in the manuscripts of the Ἱερογλυφικά: Ὁραπόλλωνος Νειλώου.¹⁴⁹⁹ The epithet Νειλῶος was interpreted by Lenormant as a reference to the city of Nilopolis (the modern *Dalāṣ*).¹⁵⁰⁰ Such an interpretation would impede an identification with the scholars of Phenebythis. But it is probably wrong: as Stephanus of Byzantium notes, the ethnic of Nilopolis was Νειλοπολίτης.¹⁵⁰¹ In all probability, the Νειλῶος of the manuscripts does not indicate a precise city, but more generally Egypt itself, the “pays du Nil”.¹⁵⁰² From this perspective, the identification of the “Egyptian Horapollon” with one of the two namesakes of the *Suda* is not

¹⁴⁹⁶ Cf. Kaster 1988, 297; Maspéro 1914, 179 –81. For an introduction to Heraiscus, see Karren 1991.

¹⁴⁹⁷ Cf. 2008, 9.

¹⁴⁹⁸ Cf. Sbordone 1940, XXXII–XXXIII.

¹⁴⁹⁹ The critical edition of Sbordone has the divided form Ὁρου Ἀπόλλωνος instead (cf. 1940, 1). The double name is reported by some manuscripts, but is scarcely plausible: cf. Masson–Fournet 1992, 231–232.

¹⁵⁰⁰ Cf. 1838, 3, n. 3. Further information about Nilopolis in Calderini 1978.

¹⁵⁰¹ Cf. *Ethn.* s.v. Νεῖλος (v 30 Billerbeck).

¹⁵⁰² The French translation comes from Masson–Fournet 1992, 234. See also Maspéro 1911, 193.

impossible. A second consideration concerns the original form of the Ἱερογλυφικά: the heading of the manuscripts presents the work as a Greek translation of an Egyptian original; the translation is attributed to a certain Philip.¹⁵⁰³ As Sbordone demonstrated, the presence of two different redactors is confirmed by the structure of the Ἱερογλυφικά. The former is mainly responsible for the first book of the work and for thirty chapters of the second; the latter completed the second book and adjusted the rest. Whereas the first author dealt with genuine Egyptian material, the latter chiefly used Greek sources. *Rebus sic stantibus*, one could identify the former writer with Horapollon and the latter with Philip.¹⁵⁰⁴ Yet, the presence of two redactors does not necessarily mean that the former wrote his part in Coptic. On the contrary, it seems more plausible that he used Greek.¹⁵⁰⁵ As Sbordone noted, the main model of Horapollon's work – the Ἱερογλυφικά of Chaeremon – was written in that language.¹⁵⁰⁶ One could also add that Greek explanations of hieroglyphics used to circulate in imperial Egypt: it is likely that Horapollon resorted to them to organize his material. Before him, Plutarch, Clemens of Alexandria, and Porphyry had done the same.¹⁵⁰⁷ A third consideration involves the philosophical layout of the Ἱερογλυφικά, which shares many elements with Egyptian Hermetism: this thematic proximity allows us to date the redaction of the Ἱερογλυφικά to late antiquity, from the second century AD onwards.¹⁵⁰⁸ As a result of this analysis, we have a late Egyptian author, who was influenced by Hermetic doctrines and wrote (in Greek) a work about the Egyptian alphabet. Such a portrait makes his identification with the younger Horapollon quite plausible. He was a Neoplatonic pagan philosopher, particularly sensitive to the contamination of Egyptian

¹⁵⁰³ Cf. *Hier.* I 1, 2–4 Sbordone: ἱερογλυφικά ἃ ἐξήνεγκε μὲν αὐτὸς Αἰγυπτία φωνῇ, μετέφρασε δὲ Φίλιππος εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα διάλεκτον («*Hieroglyphika*: having been published by him [Horapollon] in Egyptian, they were translated by Philip in Greek»).

¹⁵⁰⁴ Cf. Sbordone 1940, XXXIX–LII.

¹⁵⁰⁵ Cf. Wildish 2018, 11.

¹⁵⁰⁶ For a critical edition of testimonies and fragments of Chaeremon, see van der Horst 1984.

¹⁵⁰⁷ Cf. Sbordone 1940, XLIX.

¹⁵⁰⁸ Such a late redaction does not impede the contents of the Ἱερογλυφικά to be older: cf. Sbordone 1940, XXVIII–XXXI.

culture with Hellenistic influences. Before him, his family had been deeply interested in Egyptian traditions: his father Asclepiades had published many works on the topic.¹⁵⁰⁹ If we consider also that the name Horapollon was not so common in antiquity, the identification becomes even more plausible.¹⁵¹⁰ Indeed, the hypothesis has been sustained by many scholars.¹⁵¹¹ If we identify Horapollon Neilous with Asclepiades' son, we cannot refer the *Patria of Alexandria* to his hand.

T 2

Source date: ninth century AD.

Ἔτι δὲ καὶ Ὁραπόλλωνος γραμματικοῦ: Photius mentions the *patria* of the grammarian Horapollon while summarizing the codex 272 of his *Bibliotheca*. Along with the *Chrestomathy* of Helladius of Antinoupolis, it included other works of Egyptian authors, such as the grammarian Serenus and the curial Andronicus of Hermopolis.¹⁵¹² As already stated, Photius' reference to a "grammarian Horapollon" provides a hint to identify his source as the author of Τεμενικά.¹⁵¹³

περὶ τῶν πατρίων Ἀλεξανδρείας: for the unusual title of the work, see the introduction. One could wonder if Horapollon's *patria* were used by John Malalas to narrate the death of Cleopatra (cf. **n. 1, F1**). Nothing precludes it. Yet, since Malalas refers to a plurality of sources and does not provide any specific name, his use of Horapollon must remain

¹⁵⁰⁹ Cf. Dam. *Vit. Isid.* FF 161, 164, 165, 174 Zintzen. Maspéro suggested that even Horapollon's uncle Heraiscus wrote a text on hieroglyphics: cf. 1911, 191–192.

¹⁵¹⁰ Cf. Maspéro 1911, 191.

¹⁵¹¹ See, for instance, Maspéro 1911, 191–193; Sbordone 1940, XXXII; Masson–Fournet 1992, 233–234; Haas 1997, 171–172; Felber 1998; Frankfurter 1998, 253–254; Janiszewski 2006, 323; *BNJ* 630, T1. Lenormant (1838, *loc. cit.*) attributed the *Ἱερογλυφικά* to the elder Horapollon, but his opinion has not been followed by others scholars: indeed, this kind of text does not fit the production of a grammarian focusing on Greek antiquities; see the introduction.

¹⁵¹² For an examination of the codes and a complete list of the texts included in it, see the commentary to **n. 9, T1**.

¹⁵¹³ See the introduction.

hypothetical. The great number of authors dealing with the history of the Egyptian Alexandria makes the evaluation of the hypothesis even more difficult.

συντίθησι δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς δράματα τῷ ὁμοίῳ τύπῳ: Photius does not use the substantive *δρᾶμα* to indicate exclusively theatrical composition. As already noted, he applies the noun to any poetic piece involving a dialogue between different characters.¹⁵¹⁴ According to the patriarch, Horapollon wrote other works τῷ ὁμοίῳ τύπῳ, “of the same kind”. Janiszewski hypothesized that this note refers to meter: having stated that the preceding titles of codex 272 were mainly in iambics, “for Horapollon’s *Περὶ τῶν πατρίων Ἀλεξανδρείας* Photios did not make it clear which metrum it was written in. The phrase τῷ ὁμοίῳ τύπῳ seems to imply, however, that it was in iambic metrum” (2006, 316). The interpretation is disputable: when Photius wants to refer to the meter of his texts, he uses the substantive μέτρον. The summary of codex 272 confirms it: Helladius’ *Chrestomathy* is written ἰαμβικῶ [...] μέτρῳ (“in iambic meter”) and the other works are τῷ αὐτῷ μέτρῳ (“in the same meter”), or διαφόροις μέτροις (“in different meters”).¹⁵¹⁵ The expression τῷ ὁμοίῳ τύπῳ should be interpreted in a different way. It probably indicates that Horapollon wrote other *patria*. If Hammerstaedt’s interpretation were correct, Photius’ lexical choice would be quite interesting: indeed, it would reveal that late antique *patria* implied the performance of different actors interacting with each other.

¹⁵¹⁴ This interpretation is of Hammerstaedt 1997, 109: cf. **n. 9, T1**.

¹⁵¹⁵ For a complete list, see **n. 9, T1**.

11.

SOTERICHS OF OASIS

(*FGrHist* 641, 1080; *BNJ* 641, 1080)

Introduction

Among the Greek poets flourishing in late antiquity, the mysterious figure of Soterichus of Oasis is extremely fascinating. The number and the variety of the titles listed by later sources reveal him to have been one of the main poetical voices of the third century AD. The complete loss of his production is therefore particularly painful. Scholars have tried to integrate the scanty material at hand with other texts. Unfortunately, almost none of these attempts have been supported by strong textual evidence.¹⁵¹⁶

The only elements at our disposal to reconstruct the life of Soterichus come from the *Suda* and Stephanus of Byzantium. The former presents him as an Egyptian epic poet, who lived under the reign of the emperor Diocletian (cf. **T1**). The latter confirms the Egyptian origin, introducing Soterichus as a citizen of Oasis (cf. **T3**). These references allow us to set the activity of the poet in the cultural *milieu* of late antique Egypt, between the second half of the third century and the first half of the fourth. In those years, the composite structure of Egyptian society underwent a series of important transformations: Diocletian involved the province in his vast plan of reforms, changing its forms of government and the bureaucratic connections between the central authority and the population.¹⁵¹⁷ Local elites, above all, acquired great importance as collaborators of the emperors.¹⁵¹⁸ Soterichus was almost surely a member of this privileged class: as Cameron wrote, “the

¹⁵¹⁶ Two texts attributed to Soterichus are part of this collection: see **n. 3** and **n. 4**. Other hypothetical attributions are analyzed in the commentary.

¹⁵¹⁷ Cf. Roberto 2014, 129–135.

¹⁵¹⁸ The new figure of the *curator civitatis* (λογιστής) is a good example of this tendency. The chief executive of the city was chosen from the ranks of local curial class and substituted the extern στρατηγός as the head officer of Egyptian *nomoi*: cf. Bagnall 1996, 59–62.

education necessary to produce a poet in the later Empire was beyond the means of any but the fairly comfortably off” (2016, 4).¹⁵¹⁹

Given the vague meaning of the adjective Ὀασίτης in Roman Egypt (cf. **TT 1, 3**), the provenance of Soterichus is not entirely clear. Nevertheless, the ethnic allows me to highlight an important aspect: the poet did not come from Alexandria, but from a smaller Egyptian settlement. Along with the philosopher Plotinus, he is one of the first examples of this “peripheral” origin.¹⁵²⁰ This element gives testimony to the intense cultural life of the Egyptian province – even outside its capital – and anticipates later developments: between the fourth and the fifth centuries AD, the area of Thebes became indeed “the most productive source of Greek poets in the whole Empire”.¹⁵²¹ It is difficult to believe that Soterichus completed his liberal training in Oasis: his higher studies supposedly led him either to one of the great centers of Upper Egypt (*i.e.* Antinoupolis or Hermopolis), or directly to Alexandria. In all probability, his career took place in one of those cities under the reign of Diocletian and the other tetrarchs (as the *Suda* notes). The connection of the poet with the tetrarchic power is attested by two of his works at least: the *Encomium to Diocletian* and the *Python or Alexandriacus* (cf. **T1**). The praise of the emperor on the one hand, and the sinister representation of Thebes’ destruction on the other, reflect the troubled relationship between the Tetrarchy and the Egyptian subjects. The restless province rebelled more than once between 291 and 298 AD, probably as a result of the already mentioned administrative reforms.¹⁵²² The last revolt in particular – headed by the usurper Domitius Domitianus and his *corrector* Achilleus – caused the intervention of Diocletian himself, who invaded Egypt and sacked Alexandria.¹⁵²³ Most likely, the Tetrarchic propaganda lies behind

¹⁵¹⁹ That is confirmed by the fact that a low percentage of Egyptian population was able to write in a proper form. For a general perspective of Greek literacy in late antique Egypt, see Bagnall 1996, 230–260.

¹⁵²⁰ The *Suda* presents Plotinus as a citizen of Lycopolis, a city of Upper Egypt (cf. π 1811). For further discussion about the «peripheral» origin, see Cameron 2016, 2–5.

¹⁵²¹ Cf. Cameron 2016, 34. See also the general introduction (§ 3).

¹⁵²² Egypt lost part of its benefits: cf. Roberto 2014, 114–115. About the Egyptian revolts, see also the commentaries to **TT 1, 3**.

¹⁵²³ Further information in the commentary to **T1**.

Soterichus' *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* too (cf. **T1**): the biography of the Neoplatonic philosopher – presented as an alternative to Christ since the time of the Severan dynasty – likely reflects the anti-Christian attitude patronized by Diocletian's government. Years before the Great Persecution (303–313 AD), it was already widespread in the empire, especially in the eastern provinces.¹⁵²⁴ The scanty testimony of the *Suda* does not state whether Soterichus survived to the downfall of the tetrarchic system, or if he died before the triumph of Constantine. However, since the lexicon makes explicit reference only to Diocletian's reign, we can reasonably suppose that his poetic career did not last too long after the emperor's retirement.¹⁵²⁵

I have made reference to the political context of Soterichus' works. It is undebatable, though, that the various subjects approached by the poet do not reflect only the propagandistic guidelines of the Tetrarchy. His choice of topics was surely influenced by the cultural vogues of his age.¹⁵²⁶ Themes such as Dionysus' deeds (cf. **TT 1, 2**) or the Calydonian boar hunt (cf. **TT 4, 5**) were part of the *bagage culturel* of rhetoricians and poets; as the collections of *progymnasmata* show, they were part of their scholastic training.¹⁵²⁷ Studied and developed by the professionals of the word, these topics were familiar to the public as well, which loved (and knew what to expect from) them. They provided a common language, which was the basis of a shared emotional syntax. Even the destruction of Thebes – in spite of the political meaning it could have after the Egyptian revolt – met this demand. The *metastasis* quoted by Sopater demonstrates that the tragic end of the Boeotian city was frequently discussed because of its pathetic potentialities.¹⁵²⁸ The

¹⁵²⁴ Cf. Roberto 2014, 204–208.

¹⁵²⁵ When the *Suda* introduces an author flourishing under more than one emperor, it normally specifies it: see, for instance, the double reference to Trajan and Hadrian in α 3918, η 545, π 3037, σ 851.

¹⁵²⁶ It would be interesting to see how much the Tetrarchic propaganda influenced the taste of the public: see, for instance, what Cracco Ruggini (1965) wrote about the connections between late antique interest for Alexander the Great and the imperial expeditions against Persia.

¹⁵²⁷ For a bibliographical reference on the *progymnasmata* and their use, see **n. 4, F1**, v. 15.

¹⁵²⁸ Cf. Sop. Rhet. *Diarr. Zet.* 210–211. The same issue is addressed by Quintilian (*Inst. Or.* VIII 3, 67–69): cf. Webb 2009, 148–150.

same aspect can be noticed in other works of Soterichus: one could mention the tragedy of Panthea – the queen of Babylon who committed suicide on the grave of her husband –, or the pathetic story of Ariadne, abandoned by Theseus on the island of Naxos (cf. **T1**).¹⁵²⁹

Stephanus reveals that Soterichus wrote the *patria* of his homeland (see **T3**). Along with the anonymous *Patria of Antinopolis* (= **n. 3**) and Diogenes' *Patria of Cyzicus* (= **n. 8**), it is one of the earliest *patria* we know. Given the ambiguous identity of Soterichus' birthplace, it is not possible to determine which Oasis was celebrated by the poem. Discovering the myths included in it is impossible as well. An important element must be highlighted, though: the celebration of Oasis' antiquities blends into the Egyptian dynamism I mentioned above, and – more generally – into the Tetrarchic policy towards Roman *civitates*. Indeed, the drastic removal of old privileges and autonomies went along with a renewed interest in local traditions.¹⁵³⁰

To conclude, the elements at our disposal to reconstruct the life and the activity of Soterichus of Oasis are few: they are enough, though, to shape the image of a prolific poet, perfectly integrated – from a political, social, and cultural viewpoint – into his age.

¹⁵²⁹ If the interpretation of Livrea (1999, 72–73) were correct, and Nonnus' episode of the petrification of Ariadne really came from Soterichus' poems, this tragic / pathetic element would be even more evident. For further comments on Livrea's hypothesis, cf. **T1**.

¹⁵³⁰ As Roberto highlighted, «l'insistenza sull'appartenenza delle città a un mondo unito, di cultura ellenistico-romana, e fondato su una antica tradizione e religione» (2014, 163) was at the base of the alliance between the central power and the urban communities scattered across the empire (cf. 2014, 158–164).

Testimonia

1. Sud. σ 877

Σωτήριχος, Ὀασίτης, ἐποποιός, γεγονώς ἐπὶ Διοκλητιανοῦ. Ἐγκώμιον εἰς Διοκλητιανόν, Βασσαρικὰ ἤτοι Διονυσιακὰ βιβλία δ', Τὰ κατὰ Πάνθειαν τὴν Βαβυλωνίαν, Τὰ κατὰ Ἀριάδνην, Βίον Ἀπολλώνιου τοῦ Τυανέως, Πύθωνα ἢ Ἀλεξανδριακόν ἔστι δὲ ἱστορία Ἀλεξάνδρου τοῦ Μακεδόνο, ὅτε Θήβας παρέλαβε· καὶ ἄλλα.

1. – 5. γεγονώς – ἄλλα : AGVM | om. F || 5. παρέλαβε : codd. | κατέλαβε Daub

Soterichus, of Oasis, epic poet, lived under Diocletian. *Encomium of Diocletian, Bassarica* or *Dionysiaca* in four books, *The History of Panthea of Babylon, The History of Ariadne, The Life of Apollonius of Tyana, Python* or *Alexandriacus* (it is the story of Alexander of Macedonia, when he conquered Thebes), and other works.

2. Sud. β 140

Βασσαρικὰ ἤτοι Διονυσιακὰ ἔγραψε Σωτήριχος, γεγονώς ἐπὶ Διοκλητιανοῦ.

Bassarica or *Dionysiaca*, work of Soterichus, who lived under Diocletian.

3. Steph. Byz. s.v. Ὑασις (v 7 Billerbeck)

Ὑασις, πόλις Λιβύης, λέγεται καὶ Ὀασις καὶ ὁ πολίτης Ὀασίτης. ὁ ποιητὴς Σωτήριχος ὁ καὶ τὰ πάτρια γεγραφώς αὐτῆς.

1. Ὀασίτης. ὁ : codd. | Ὀασίτης. *** ὁ dub. ego | Ὀ. <ὡς> ὁ dub. Van Berkel | Ὀ. <οὔτως> ὁ vel Ὀ. <Ὀασίτης καὶ> ὁ Jacoby || ὁ καὶ : cum Holste | καὶ ὁ codd. | καὶ ὁ vel ὁ [καὶ] dub. Jacoby || 2. αὐτῆς : cum Jacoby | αὐτοῦ RQ | om. PN

Yasis, a city of Libya; it is said also *Oasis*, and its citizen is named *Oasites*. The poet Soterichus who wrote also the *Patria* of it.

4. John Tzetzes, *Schol. Lycoph. Alex.* 486 (175 Scheer)

τὸ δὲ πλάτος τῆς ἱστορίας Ὅμηρός φησι· καὶ Σωτήριχος ἐν τοῖς Καλυδωνιακοῖς λέγει ***.

2. λέγει *** : cum Scheer | λέγει Müller | λέγων codd.

Homer extensively reports the story. Soterichus inserts it as well in his Calydoniaca.

5. John Tzetzes, *Chil.* VII 102, 69–70

Σωτήριχος καὶ Ὅμηρος καὶ ἄλλοι δὲ μυρίοι
περὶ τοῦ κάπρου μέμνηνται τοῦδε τοῦ Καλυδῶνος.

Soterichus and Homer and many others
have recalled this boar of Calydon.

Commentary

T 1

Source date: tenth century AD.

Σωτήριχος, Ὁασίτης, ἐποποιός: the meaning of the ethnic Ὁασίτης is not clear. Ancient sources assign it to the inhabitants of two Egyptian oases, namely the Ὁασίς Μεγάλη (*Oasis Magna* in the Roman administration) and the Ὁασίς Μικρά (= *Oasis Parva*): the former included the modern oases of *el-Daḳla* and *el-Kharga*; the latter those of *el-Bahariya* and *Farafra*.¹⁵³¹ It is not possible to determine which region Soterichus belonged to: Bidez linked him to the Ὁασίς Μεγάλη, the most densely populated.¹⁵³² Schubert supported the hypothesis.¹⁵³³ However, a provenance from Ὁασίς Μικρά cannot be excluded: the hypothesis was supported by Braccini.¹⁵³⁴ The reference of Stephanus presenting Soterichus as a πολίτης Ὁασίτης is of little help (cf. **T3**).

γεγονώς ἐπὶ Διοκλητιανοῦ: Gaius Aurelius Valerius Diocletian ruled from 284 to 305 AD.¹⁵³⁵ Therefore, the reference sets the activity of Soterichus between the end of the third century AD and the beginning of the fourth.

Ἐγκώμιον εἰς Διοκλητιανόν: the composition of an encomium by an Egyptian poet of the third century is not surprising. This kind of literary product was particularly widespread in late antique Egypt, and there is no reason to suppose that the situation was different in the rest of the

¹⁵³¹ Cf. Wagner 1987, 126–137. A reference to the famous Siwa oasis is difficult to sustain, because its inhabitants used to be named Ammonites: cf. Jackson 2002, 160; Wagner 1987, 214.

¹⁵³² Cf. 1903, 84–85.

¹⁵³³ Cf. *BNJ* 641 T2.

¹⁵³⁴ Cf. 2003, 166–181.

¹⁵³⁵ For further information (and bibliographical references), cf. **n. 3**, F 6, v. 20.

empire.¹⁵³⁶ Outside the *Suda*, no other source quotes Soterichus' *Encomium*. The superficial notice in the lexicon makes it impossible to understand when, where, and why Soterichus wrote it. Bidez hypothesized that a part of it had been preserved by the *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 480.¹⁵³⁷ As already said, the papyrus celebrates the Persian campaign of Diocletian and Galerius (297 AD). The connection between the poem and Soterichus is difficult to verify. The lines are not enough to state what kind of work they belonged to. As Gigli Piccardi wrote, they can be linked either to an encomium, or to a historic epic.¹⁵³⁸ In the former case, the identification with the *Encomium of Diocletian* could be taken into account. If the lines of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 480 corresponded to the encomium of Soterichus, it would be possible to date it: the mention of the Persian campaign clearly dates the poem of the papyrus to the end of the third century AD, after 297–299. The sources report that Diocletian went to Egypt in the second half of 301 AD, and remained in the province until the summer of 302 AD: during these months, he issued the edict on Maximum Prices (between the 20th November and the 9th December 301 AD) and that against Manichaeism (31st March 302 AD).¹⁵³⁹ At that time, imperial propaganda was strongly focused on the Persian victory: as the *Chronographia* of Malalas reports, the celebrations took place all around the empire, and δωρεαὶ παρεσχέθησαν παρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως πάσῃ τῇ Ῥωμαίων πολιτείᾳ ὑπὲρ τῶν ἐπινικίων (“gifts were given by the monarch to the whole Roman state to celebrate the victory”).¹⁵⁴⁰ The emperor himself offered to Alexandria the privilege of the *panis castrensis* (spring of 302 AD) as a sign of reconciliation after the bloody repression of Domitianus' revolt.¹⁵⁴¹ Both the imperial propaganda and the presence of Diocletian uphold the Egyptian stay of the emperor as the perfect background to the poem of *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 480, whoever its author was. The public

¹⁵³⁶ Cf. Miguélez Caverio 2008, 340–366, esp. 343–349. For a proper introduction to the epideictic culture of the age, see the classical study of Pernot 1993, esp. I 55 – 111.

¹⁵³⁷ See the introduction to **n. 4**.

¹⁵³⁸ Cf. 1990, 46.

¹⁵³⁹ Cf. Roberto 2014, 170–172, 306 n. 4.

¹⁵⁴⁰ Cf. XII 40. See Roberto 2014, 169–170.

¹⁵⁴¹ About this grain dole, see Roberto 2015.

reading could have taken place in front of the court, in one of the celebrations of the period. The same environment would be right for a historical epic, similar to Claudian's epics on the Gothic and Gildonic wars: in that case, though, the attribution to Soterichus would be more difficult. To summarize, the nature and the authorship of the papyrus of Strasbourg must remain an open question: it is possible to identify it with the *Encomium* of Soterichus, but there is no evidence to confirm it.

Βασσαρικά ἦτοι Διονυσιακά βιβλία δ΄: according to Livrea, the composition of a Dionysiac epic reveals Soterichus as one of the sources of Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*.¹⁵⁴² The influence of the former on the verses of the latter may be indicated by the ample space given by Nonnus to Thebes and Ariadne.¹⁵⁴³ That the poet of Panopolis got his inspiration from his older colleague of Oasis is plausible: the two authors came from the same Egyptian context, were not so distant in time, and wrote compositions on the same topics.¹⁵⁴⁴ Unfortunately, since no line has survived – either from the four books of *Bassarica*, or from the work on Ariadne – the nature and the intensity of their relationship cannot be tested. When Nonnus wrote his epic, Soterichus was not the only author who had focused his poems either on Thebes, or on Ariadne. In the second century AD, Oppian had dedicated a section of his *Cynegetica* to Dionysus.¹⁵⁴⁵ Before him, the mysterious Dionysius Bassaricus had composed an epic on the god, giving it the same title as Soterichus' work (Βασσαρικά).¹⁵⁴⁶ Hymns to Dionysus have also been transmitted by a papyrus of the third century,¹⁵⁴⁷ an epigram of the *Greek Anthology*,¹⁵⁴⁸ and some orphic hymns.¹⁵⁴⁹ Many of these authors were used by

¹⁵⁴² Cf. 1999, 69–71.

¹⁵⁴³ The link between the two poets is one of the arguments Livrea brought to attribute *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352 to Soterichus: see the introduction to **n. 3**.

¹⁵⁴⁴ A brief discussion of Nonnus' dating in **n. 7, T1**.

¹⁵⁴⁵ Cf. IV 230–319. See Englhofer 1995, 169–173; Zumbo 2000, 712–723.

¹⁵⁴⁶ Critical edition, translation and commentary of the fragments in Livrea 1973b.

¹⁵⁴⁷ *P. Ross. Georg.* I 11 = Heitsch 56.

¹⁵⁴⁸ Cf. IX 524.

¹⁵⁴⁹ Cf. 30, 45–57, 50, 52–53. See Miguélez Caverio 2008, 22.

Nonnus.¹⁵⁵⁰ On the one hand, they demonstrate how popular the Dionysian mythology was in the empire (and how integrated Soterichus was in the culture of his age); on the other hand, they doom to failure any attempt at determining Soterichus' elements in Nonnus.

Τὰ κατὰ Πάνθειαν τὴν Βαβυλωνίαν: along with her husband Abradatas, the fictional king of Susa, Panthea is one of the protagonists of Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*.¹⁵⁵¹ The queen was captured by Cyrus the Great during his war against the Assyrians. The respectful treatment she received in the Persian camp convinced her husband to join Cyrus' army. When he fell in battle, Panthea committed suicide on his grave. The tale of the royal couple achieved a great success: Soterichus is just one of the authors who drew inspiration from Xenophon' work.¹⁵⁵² According to Whitmarsh, the form of the title as it is reported by the

¹⁵⁵⁰ Cf. Wifstrand 1933, 178–179; Barigazzi 1963, 416–454; Keydell 1982, 268–269; Wilson 1993, 213–219; Livrea 1995, 56–60; Tissoni 1998, 20–26; Vian 2005, 585–596. For further information about Nonnus' sources, see Chuvin 1991; Acosta-Hughes 2016, 507–528; Bannert-Kröll 2016, 481–506; Maciver 2016, 529–548; Miguélez Caverio 2016, 549–573.

¹⁵⁵¹ Cf. V 1, 2; VI 1, 45–52; 3, 35–36; 4, 2–10; VII 1, 29–32; 3, 2–14.

¹⁵⁵² Another example from the imperial age is provided by Philostratus of Lemnos (*Imag.* II 9). Further information about the role of Xenophon's tale in the development of the Hellenistic and Oriental romance in Davis 2002 (esp. 26–29). For what concerns Soterichus, one cannot exclude the influence of the imperial propaganda in the choice of a Persian topic: the campaigns against the Persians aroused the interest in the east. Another interesting element concerns the treatment of Panthea: the queen was respected during her imprisonment. According to the historian Peter the Patrician (F 201 Banchich = F 13 Müller), the treatment of prisoners was one of the points discussed by Galerius and the Persian ambassador Apharban at the end of the Persian conflict. The latter was received to discuss the return of the familiars of Narseh, hostages of the Romans. He invited the Caesar to respect the defeated king, considering how capricious the destiny is. The light threat of the noble disappointed Galerius: he reproached the ambassador for the humiliating captivity of the emperor Valerian and compared it to the respectful treatment of the Persian royal family. The Roman values imposed, as Vergil had written, to have mercy of the losers (cf. *Aen.* VI 853). The representation of Roman φιλανθρωπία as a sign of superiority upon Persians is highlighted by Festus (*Brev.* 25) too. Stressing this element was surely of interest to the Tetrarchs and their propaganda. The image of Cyrus as a merciful sovereign in the *History of Panthea* could have been influenced by that.

Suda (τὰ κατὰ + name of a girl) refers to a novel.¹⁵⁵³ The interpretation is not implausible. It is true that the *Suda* uses the same construction to name historiographical works¹⁵⁵⁴ and poems too.¹⁵⁵⁵ However, the tragic story of the queen perfectly matches the typical erotic plot of ancient novel.¹⁵⁵⁶ Indeed, the tale of Xenophon has been described as the “apparent source of the central character–type of the Hellenistic romances” (Davis 2002, 28). For Soterichus’ production, the same characterization of Panthea’s story can be attributed to that on Ariadne too: the same title form supposedly reveals a similar structure (see below).

Τὰ κατὰ Ἀριάδνην: the choice of Ariadne as the subject of a composition confirms the Dionysian interests of Soterichus. The form of the title echoes that of Panthea: if the interpretation of Whitmarsh is correct, both texts were romances (see above). The story of Minos’ daughter – abandoned by Theseus on the beaches of Naxos and later married by the god Dionysus – provided good material for an erotic novel. Unsurprisingly, the Cretan princess has quite a bit of space in Nonnus’ *Dionysiaca*: to her story, the poet dedicates the so-called “epyllion of Ariadne”.¹⁵⁵⁷ Having narrated Dionysus’ union with Ariadne, this section of the *Dionysiaca* recounts the voyage of the god to the city of Argos: the king Perseus fights against him and uses the head of Medusa to petrify his wife. This story is not attested anywhere else. According to Livrea, it comes from Soterichus: the poet must have been strongly interested in Perseus’ deeds because of his crossing of the Libyan desert. His local focus may have been inherited by Nonnus.¹⁵⁵⁸ As

¹⁵⁵³ Cf. 2005, 601–604.

¹⁵⁵⁴ Cf. ε 3755.

¹⁵⁵⁵ Cf. ι 84.

¹⁵⁵⁶ Cf. Miguélez Caverio 2016, 556–557. For a proper introduction to the ancient novel and its general features, see also the essays collected by Schmelling 2003.

¹⁵⁵⁷ Cf. *D.* XLVII 265–741.

¹⁵⁵⁸ Cf. 1999, 73: «tutto indica che la sforzata saldatura col mito di Perseo sia un tributo pagato alla fonte, appunto Soterico: questi [...] non poteva ignorare che il “suo” deserto libico era stato il teatro della trasvolata di Perseo dopo l’uccisione della Gorgone [...]. Dunque la larga e spesso problematica presenza di Perseo in Nonno, *D.* 47 si spiegherà con Soterico, a cui ci sentiremmo di

already stated, the connection between Soterichus and Nonnus is not implausible. Two remarks must be made, though. First: Nonnus could have found the petrification of Ariadne in other sources: for instance, D'Ippolito referred the episode to an Alexandrian epyllion.¹⁵⁵⁹ The link with the Libyan desert is not cogent. Second: even if the text of Soterichus was used by Nonnus, it is not possible to affirm that the fight against Perseus came from it. A more general observation is necessary. As the analysis of Miguélez Caverio demonstrates, Nonnus used to adapt and transform the novelistic material when introducing it into his epic: in a sense, he “denatured” it.¹⁵⁶⁰ The representation of Dionysus exemplifies the process: in spite of the numerous novelistic (= erotic) adventures involving him, the god “is not interested in becoming a competent novelistic lover”; he maintains a “multi-faceted” erotic characterization, which is “at odds with the novelistic pattern of reciprocal love” (Miguélez Caverio 2016, 557). At first, the episode of Ariadne seems to follow the traditional scheme: the god immediately falls in love with the abandoned princess and decides to marry her. However, as the story continues, the plot is abruptly altered. Ariadne dies, and her death does not lead the episode to a tragic end (like the killing of Abradatas in Panthea’s episode). *Au contraire*, the god swiftly moves forward. In the following book, he falls in love with two other maidens, namely Pallene¹⁵⁶¹ and Aura,¹⁵⁶² and tries to seduce them. The apparition of Ariadne in his dreams does not change the situation.¹⁵⁶³ The evolution of the story goes against the mythical tradition,¹⁵⁶⁴ but fits perfectly the narrative consuetude of Nonnus’ poem. The petrification of Ariadne – the most original section of the epyllion – allows to the Panopolite to get rid of one of his characters and to leave his protagonist free to seduce other women. Therefore, nothing impedes referring the

attribuire l’isolata e particolarissima versione della pietrificazione di Ariadne, funzionale ad un protagonismo dell’uccisore della Gorgone che ben si giustifica nel poeta di Oasi – memore di una gloria locale –, ma non in quello di Panopoli».

¹⁵⁵⁹ Cf. 1964, 120–128.

¹⁵⁶⁰ Cf. 2016, 549–573.

¹⁵⁶¹ Cf. *D.* XLVIII 90–240.

¹⁵⁶² Cf. XLVIII 241–948.

¹⁵⁶³ Cf. XLVIII 530–564.

¹⁵⁶⁴ The tradition included the divinization of Ariadne: cf. Schlesier 2011, 87–88.

“sforzata saldatura” between Perseus’ and Dionysus’ myths to Nonnus himself. Even if Soterichus’ work was the source of the episode, it is highly likely that Nonnus tampered with it: it is not possible to determine how much. To conclude, the hypothesis of Livrea, who linked Ariadne’s epyllion to the works of Soterichus, is not implausible. Yet, it cannot be demonstrated. It is not possible to affirm that Nonnus used Soterichus. If he did, we cannot determine how much he changed the source. Since the strange conclusion of the epyllion matches perfectly with the novelistic tradition in the *Dionysiaca*, its Nonnian authorship cannot be excluded.

Βίον Ἀπολλώνιου τοῦ Τυανέως: the neo-Pythagorean philosopher Apollonius is one of the most prominent figures of the imperial age. Moving between Asia Minor and Syria (if he did not arrive in Persia and India, as his legend says), he earned a reputation for wisdom and asceticism. He supposedly died under the emperor Nerva (96–98 AD).¹⁵⁶⁵ The *Suda* attributes five works to his hand: the *Initiations or On Sacrifices* (Τελεταὶ ἢ περὶ θυσιῶν), the *Testament* (Διαθήκη), the *Oracles* (Χρησμοί), the *Letters* (Ἐπιστολαί), and finally the *Life of Pythagoras* (Πυθαγόρου βίος).¹⁵⁶⁶ From these works some letters have survived,¹⁵⁶⁷ along with an excerpt from the *Initiations* preserved by Eusebius.¹⁵⁶⁸ They reveal the pronounced religious interests of Apollonius and the mystic attitude of his Pythagoreanism: these factors contributed to create his reputation as a miracle maker and a wizard. It rapidly spread in the Eastern empire and was later canonized by the biography of Philostratus (first half of the third century AD). The sophist described his protagonist as a Pythagorean ascetic and linked the miracles scattered throughout the biography to his ascetic practices: by doing so,

¹⁵⁶⁵ The bibliography concerning Apollonius and Philostratus’ biography is endless. Space forces to provide just a few references: Petzke 1970; Speyer 1974; Bowie 1978; Dzielska 1986; Flinterman 1995; Hahn 2003; Jones 2006.

¹⁵⁶⁶ Cf. α 3420.

¹⁵⁶⁷ A part of them is surely not authentic: cf. Penella 1979, 1–4, 23–29.

¹⁵⁶⁸ Cf. *Praep. Evang.* IV 13. A text with a similar content is preserved by Porphyry (*De abst.* II 34). It is likely the source of Eusebius: cf. Norden 1913, 343–346; Dzielska 1986, 136–137. Some sections of Pythagoras’ biography have been used by Iamblichus’ *Life*: cf. *FGrHist* 1064.

he dismissed the rumors of witchcraft.¹⁵⁶⁹ The biography of Philostratus “turned a modest Cappadocian mystic into an impressive figure, full of life, politically outstanding” (Dzielska 1986, 14): it laid the foundations for Apollonius’ myth. The main heritage it transmitted to the ensuing traditions is the strong affinity between the life of the philosopher and that of Jesus.¹⁵⁷⁰ The comparison supplied material to anti-Christian polemicists: Porphyry was the first to use it. In his *Contra Christianos*, he quoted Apollonius as an example of a pagan sage able to perform the same miracles as Jesus.¹⁵⁷¹ At the end of the third century, the high official Sossianus Hierocles – *auctor et consiliarius* of Diocletian’s Great Persecution¹⁵⁷² – published a treaty entitled Φιλαλήθης λόγος, “the Friend of the Truth”. It has not survived, but the testimony of the Christian authors refuting it allows us to determine its contents:¹⁵⁷³

¹⁵⁶⁹ That supposedly was the main difference with earlier biographies: cf. Raynor 1984, 222–224.

¹⁵⁷⁰ The two personalities share many elements. Just to list some of them: a) the birth of Jesus is predicted to his mother by the archangel Gabriel (*Lc* 1, 26–37); that of Apollonius by the god Proteus (*VA* I 4). Both the deliveries are announced by celestial signs (*Mt* 2, 1–12.16; *VA* I 5); b) both Jesus and Apollonius heal sick persons (*Mt* 9, 1–8; *Mc* 7, 31–37; 8, 22–26; 10, 46–52; *Lc* 17, 11–19; etc.; *VA* VI 43) and drive out evil spirits (*Lc* 8, 22–39; *VA* III 38; IV 10). They also resuscitate dead people (*Mc* 5, 21–43; *Lc* 7, 11–17; *Gv* 11, 1–44; *VA* IV 45); c) they are arrested and processed by the Romans (*Mt* 26, 57–27, 26; *Mc* 14, 43–15, 15; *Lc* 22, 54–23, 25; *Gv* 18, 12–19.16; *VA* VII 15–21; VIII 1–7); d) both Jesus and Apollonius ascend to heaven (*Mc* 16, 19; *Lc* 24, 50–53; *At* 1, 3–11; *VA* VIII 30).

¹⁵⁷¹ Cf. Ieron. *Tract. De Ps.* LXXXI 225–227 (F 4 Harnack).

¹⁵⁷² Cf. Lact. *De mort. pers.* 16, 4; *Div. Inst.* V 2, 12. Cf. *PLRE* I, 432 (‘Sossianus Hierocles’); see also Barnes 1976, esp. 243–245; Simmons 2000, esp. 848. For further information about Diocletian’s Great Persecution (303–313), see De Sainte-Croix 1954; Liebeschuetz 1979; Barnes 1981; Corcoran 1996; Clarke 2005.

¹⁵⁷³ See the writings of Lactantius (who was in Nicomedia when the persecution started and probably listened to a public reading of Hierocles’ book: cf. *Div. Inst.* V 2, 12; 4, 1; Cook 2000, 252), Eusebius (most likely different from Eusebius of Caesarea: cf. Hägg 1992, and Johnson 2013; *contra* Borzi 2003 and Jones 2006), and Macarius Magnes (the author of the Ἀποκριτικός πρὸς Ἑλληνας, an apology against Neo-Platonism: cf. Corsaro 1984; DePalma Digeser 2002, Capone 2012; Volp 2013). All of them tried to oppose Hierocles’ ideas: Eusebius in particular devoted an entire book to the refutation. It is entitled Πρὸς τὰ ὑπὸ Φιλοστράτου εἰς Ἀπολλώνιον τὸν Τυανέα διὰ τὴν Ἱεροκλεῖ παραληφθεῖσαν αὐτοῦ τὸ καὶ Χριστοῦ σύγκρισιν («Against the Life of Apollonius of Tyana

Apollonius was presented in the book as a valuable alternative to Christ. Hierocles made fun of Christians' credulity, because they acknowledged the divinity of Christ just for his miracles,¹⁵⁷⁴ pointed out the charlatanry of the first apostles, and ridiculed the low literary level of Christian scriptures.¹⁵⁷⁵ He defined Jesus as a mere wizard¹⁵⁷⁶ and mocked his bad conduct in front of Pilate.¹⁵⁷⁷ On the contrary – he noted –, Apollonius never presented himself as a god, even if he had performed a lot of miracles,¹⁵⁷⁸ and did not allow the emperor Domitian to condemn him.¹⁵⁷⁹ His disciples were learned men such as Maximus, Damis and Philostratus, perfectly able to write at a proper level.¹⁵⁸⁰ The λόγος achieved resounding success through all the eastern empire: as Dzielska remarked, “thanks to Hierocles, Philostratus, whose work had not been much read in the third century, became popular. The Greek magician and sage was remembered again, the centers of his cult flourished, talismans signed with his name began to circulate. Apollonius' statues and effigies reappeared. Hierocles appealed to the memory of the Greeks inhabiting the part of the Greek east where once Apollonius was well known and admired” (1986, 157). The *Life* written by Soterichus can be seen as an effect of this renewed interest, which survived the Tetrarchic age and did not involve only the east.¹⁵⁸¹ In the eyes of the Egyptian poet, Apollonius was an excellent subject to deal with: he was *à la mode*, in line with the imperial anti-Christian propaganda and even connected to Egypt (visited by the sage in one of his journeys¹⁵⁸²). Another attractive element was the Egyptian stay of Hierocles, who was prefect of the province in 307. It would be possible to hypothesize that

written by Philostratus, occasioned by the parallel drawn by Hierocles between him and Christ»), but is traditionally abridged in *Contra Hieroclem* (cf. Cook 2000, 255).

¹⁵⁷⁴ Cf. Eus. *Contr. Hier.* 2.

¹⁵⁷⁵ Cf. Eus. *Contr. Hier. loc. cit.*

¹⁵⁷⁶ Cf. Lact. *Div. Inst.* V 3.

¹⁵⁷⁷ Cf. Lact. *Div. Inst. loc. cit.*

¹⁵⁷⁸ Cf. Eus. *Contr. Hier., loc. cit.*; Lact. *Div. Inst., loc. cit.*

¹⁵⁷⁹ Cf. Eus. *Contr. Hier.* 39; Lact. *Div. Inst., loc. cit.*

¹⁵⁸⁰ Cf. Eus. *Contr. Hier.* 2.

¹⁵⁸¹ An example of that is provided by the famous epigram of Aege; it refers to the sage and uses a clear Christian vocabulary: cf. Jones 1980, 190–194. Further examples in Dzielska 1986, 166–183.

¹⁵⁸² Cf. Phil. *VA VI* 1–5.

Soterichus wrote his *Life* in the honor of the prefect, or – why not? – at his suggestion. The work could have been based on the material collected by Philostratus (maybe with a stronger Egyptian focus?) and influenced by the “Christological” perspective of the Φιλαλήθης λόγος.

Πύθωνα ἢ Ἀλεξανδριακόν ἔστι δὲ ἱστορία Ἀλεξάνδρου τοῦ Μακεδόνης, ὅτε Θήβας παρέλαβε: the last title listed by the *Suda* is the most difficult to interpret. The lexicographer himself must have been aware of that, since he feels the need to explain it. As he notes, the work presented the conquest of Thebes by Alexander the Great. The explanation raises three problems at least: first, the identity of Python; second, his (or its) connection with the fate of Thebes; third, the nature of Soterichus’ work. Müller was the first scholar to deal with those questions while editing the *recensio α* (or *vetusta*) of the Alexander romance.¹⁵⁸³ At the end of the first book, the text narrates the punishment of Thebes.¹⁵⁸⁴ In doing so, it includes a series of 145 iambs summarizing the mythical history of the city. The Theban flautist Ismenias evokes it to convince Alexander to spare the native land of his divine ancestor Heracles and Dionysus. The attempt is not successful: the Macedonian king rejects the plea and orders his soldiers to destroy the city.¹⁵⁸⁵ Müller interpreted the section as a reworking of Soterichus’ *Python*: “Nimirum Python [...] Sotericho erat draco, quem in Cithaerone ad fontem Ismeni Cadmus olim occiderat. Hanc ob caedem succensebit deus, dolebit eam Cithaeron, plorabit Ismenus donec occisor ac prosapia ejus piaculum expiaverit” (1846, XXV). The scholar identified the Πύθων of the title as the snake killed by Cadmus when founding Thebes.¹⁵⁸⁶ This “original sin” was avenged by Alexander the Great through the destruction of the city. Müller’s interpretation of Soterichus’ work implies a negative view of Thebes, which was represented by the poet as a cursed city, founded on a sacrilegious killing. The lines of Ismenias seem to confirm this perspective: the flutist presents Thebes as the seat

¹⁵⁸³ *Parisinus Graecus* 1711, f. 395–427 v: cf. Müller 1846. Critical text in Kroll 1926. Cf. Braccini 2004, XX–XXI; Traina 1998, 311–322.

¹⁵⁸⁴ Cf. I 46,11–I 46a.

¹⁵⁸⁵ Cf. v. 89–145.

¹⁵⁸⁶ Cf. Hyg. *Fab.* 178; Apoll. *Bibl.* 3, 23–27.

of the most bloody myths.¹⁵⁸⁷ The savage joy shown by the Cythaeron and the Ismenus for the destruction of the city concurs: the mountain and the river rejoice for the punishment of Cadmus' heirs.¹⁵⁸⁸ The interpretation of Müller was developed by Nauck, who edited the choliambis and explicitly attributed them to Soterichus.¹⁵⁸⁹ Jouanno mentioned the hypothesis in her article on the capture of Thebes, but did not take a position in favor of it.¹⁵⁹⁰ Equally circumspect was the approach of Franco.¹⁵⁹¹ In his 1999 article on *P. Oxy. LXIII* 4352, Livrea presented the idea as a temerarious one and highlighted the necessity of a deep study to verify it.¹⁵⁹² He made the same observation in a 2002 article.¹⁵⁹³ Two other scholars studied the source of the choliambis, namely Braccini, who edited the passage in 2004, and Janiszewski.¹⁵⁹⁴ The former presented the verses as an "iambic vulgarization" of Soterichus' work (or of a part of it).¹⁵⁹⁵ A similar conclusion was reached by Janiszewski, who did not exclude the possibility that Soterichus had

¹⁵⁸⁷ Cf. Braccini 2004, XXXI.

¹⁵⁸⁸ At the end of chapter 46, the author says that ἔχαιρέ τε Κιθαίων ἐπὶ θρήνοις οἰκείοις καὶ πόνοις ἐπιτερπόμενος, «the Cithaeron rejoiced and delighted in the laments and the pains of the inhabitants» (I 46, 11); at the end of chapter 46a, he confirms his representation through a couple of verses: πάλιν Κιθαίων ἐπεχόρευε Θηβαίοις, / Ἴσμηνός αὐτὸς αἰμόφυρτος <ῆν> ῥεύσας («Again the Cithaeron danced for the Thebans / and the Ismenus itself flowed full of blood»: I 46a, 125–126).

¹⁵⁸⁹ Cf. 1849, 613–626. In spite of its great value, the edition was not taken into account until the end of the following century; Livrea re-discovered it: cf. Braccini 2004, XXVI.

¹⁵⁹⁰ Cf. 1993, 253.

¹⁵⁹¹ Cf. 2001, 49.

¹⁵⁹² Cf. 1999, 69, n. 4.

¹⁵⁹³ While prospecting the extended critical edition of Soterichus' huge poem (see the introduction to **n. 4**), he added: «non sono ancora in grado di decidere se ne faranno parte i numerosi ardui coliami fluiti nello Pseudo-Callistene [...]. Non sarei alieno dal considerarli una poetizzazione giambica tardoantica di un originale esametrico di Soterico» (2002, 22, n. 14).

¹⁵⁹⁴ Cf. 2006, 152–161.

¹⁵⁹⁵ Cf. 2004, LV: «una sorta di parafrasi o ripresa (più o meno fedele), del poema perduto o almeno di una sua parte, una sorta di "volgarizzazione giambica", per rendere accessibile e godibile ai più, in un metro più orecchiabile dell'ostico esametro, il contenuto del dotto poema di Soterico, secondo una tendenza attestata in tutta l'età imperiale e che giungerà al suo culmine nel VI secolo».

written his work directly in iambs.¹⁵⁹⁶ Along with the destruction of Thebes, the anonymous redactor of the *recensio α* extensively describes the foundation of Alexandria: in spite of the historical reality, he places the episode before the siege of the Boeotian city and associates it with a long prophecy predicting the illustrious future of Alexander's founding.¹⁵⁹⁷ There is a connection between the fates of the two cities: the destruction of the former is balanced by the building of the latter. The end of Thebes is accompanied by a poetic section presenting its cursed past; the origin of Alexandria by verses announcing its blessed future instead. The equilibrium between the two passages was noted by Tallet-Bonvalot, who presented the Theban and the Alexandrian sections as the two components of a diptych.¹⁵⁹⁸ Her interpretation was supported by Jouanno,¹⁵⁹⁹ Franco,¹⁶⁰⁰ and Braccini.¹⁶⁰¹ As the last scholar wrote, the Alexandrian redactor of the *recensio α* wanted to represent Egypt as the center of Alexander's life, setting his Greek origins aside: Ismenias tries to move Alexander remembering the Theban origin of his ancestors, but the Macedonian does not listen to him.¹⁶⁰² In order to achieve his goal, the redactor used the negative portrait of Thebes offered by Soterichus' poem. When analyzing the poetic sections of the *recensio α*, Braccini pointed out that they were stylistically similar, the Theban section being more filled with mythological references.¹⁶⁰³ On the one hand, the stylistic consonance demonstrates that the poetic sections of the novel must be attributed to a single writer, who adapted the material at his disposal to his ability and style; on the other hand, the deep antiquarian knowledge of the Theban verses reveals that their source was different (*lege*: more erudite) than those of the other passages. Therefore, if Ismenias' plea was based on the *Python*, it must be taken as a later reworking of Soterichus' text, not as a fragment of it: that excludes one of

¹⁵⁹⁶ Cf. 2006, 155–156.

¹⁵⁹⁷ Cf. I 30–33.

¹⁵⁹⁸ Cf. 1994, 25.

¹⁵⁹⁹ Cf. 1993, 253.

¹⁶⁰⁰ Cf. 2001, 53.

¹⁶⁰¹ Cf. 2003, 177–181; 2004, XXXI–XXXII.

¹⁶⁰² Cf. *Rec. α*, I 46a, 92–122.

¹⁶⁰³ Cf. 2004, XXX.

Janiszewski's hypotheses. But it is possible that the source of the poem was another text. The hypothesis of Müller presents three difficulties at least. First of all, the dragon killed by Cadmus is never named πύθων by ancient sources: they use the substantive δράκων instead.¹⁶⁰⁴ The noun Python belongs to another mythical creature, namely the primeval monster defeated by Apollo (see below). Second, if Alexander the Great was presented by the poet as the avenger of a crime, this crime need not necessarily be Cadmus' fighting with the dragon¹⁶⁰⁵: the episode does not receive more space in the poem than other myths such as the fury of Heracles¹⁶⁰⁶ or his death.¹⁶⁰⁷ As observed by Braccini himself, an excellent alternative reason for the wrath of the gods against Thebes could be provided by the imprisonment of Dionysus.¹⁶⁰⁸ Finally, the idea itself of a necessary revenge has scanty textual basis: as already said, the joy of the Cythaeron and the Ismenus is the only element revealing it. However, if the "providential" action of Alexander was the main topic of the composition, we could expect more references to it among the verses. Yet, there is none. Of course, this lack could be due to the action of the redactor, but the hypothesis is not particularly convincing. If the anonymous writer wanted to cast Thebes in the worst light possible, why should he have deleted such an alluring element as a divine curse? It is more likely that this curse was not of great importance in the structure of the poem; or – just to be more extreme –, that it was completely extraneous to it. Given all these elements, we can take into account the hypothesis that Soterichus was not the source of Ismenias' verses, and that his *Python* was not the work hypothesized by Müller and his successors. There are indeed other possibilities. As already said, Πύθων was the name of the snake who guarded the oracle of Delphi and was killed by Apollo. The link of the monster with the sanctuary of the

¹⁶⁰⁴ Cf. Ath. *Deipn.* 15, 701c; Plut. *Pelop.* 16, 375c; Ovid. *Met.* I 438–447; Hyg. *Fab.* 140. Some sources do not name the monster: cf. *H. Hom.* 3, 300–374; Eur. *IT* 1245–1252. Other mention a female snake, and name her Delphyne: cf. Apoll. Rhod. II 706; *Schol. Eur. Phoen.* 232, 233; Nonn. *D.* XIII 28. See Ogden 2013, 48–54.

¹⁶⁰⁵ According to the tradition, the killing of the snake was directly expiated by Cadmus: cf. Ogden 2013, 181.

¹⁶⁰⁶ Cf. vv. 25–26.

¹⁶⁰⁷ Cf. vv. 29–30.

¹⁶⁰⁸ Cf. 2004, LI.

god was so strong, that the name of the former ended up indicating the city hosting the latter.¹⁶⁰⁹ The *Acts of the Apostles* – probably influenced by that – attribute the noun to the spirit of divination¹⁶¹⁰ and their choice is echoed by Byzantine lexicographers.¹⁶¹¹ Given these elements, the title of Soterichus’ work could make reference to the oracle of Delphi, maybe to one of its prophecies. The sources report three Delphic oracles somehow connected to the destruction of Thebes. Immediately after the plea of Ismenias, the *recensio α* of the Alexander romance illustrates the fate of the Theban survivors: they go to Delphi and ask the Pythia when and how they will rebuild their city. The priestess answers with a couple of hexameters: Ἑρμῆς καὶ Ἀλκείδης καὶ ἱμαντομάχος Πολυδεύκης / οἱ τρεῖς ἀθλήσαντες ἀνακτίσουσί σε Θήβη, “Hermes, Alcides and the pugilist Polydeuctis: the efforts of these three will rebuild you, Thebes”.¹⁶¹² The episode is reported also in the Latin translation of Iulius Valerius,¹⁶¹³ the Syriac version,¹⁶¹⁴ and the *recensio Byzantina poetica*.¹⁶¹⁵ The second prophecy was canonized by Plutarch.¹⁶¹⁶ After the razing of Thebes and a brief stay in Corinth, Alexander comes to Delphi to consult the Pythia. He has been named leader of Greece for the forthcoming expedition against Persia, and needs the advise of Apollo. According to Plutarch, the priestess refused to give him a response and quoted the law as a justification. The son of Philip bursts into the house of the prophetess and drags her to the temple. Taken unawares, the woman cries: ἀνίκητος εἶ ὦ παῖ, “My son, you are invincible!”. On hearing that, Alexander says that he is satisfied and leaves the sanctuary. The last oracle is provided by the history of Diodorus Siculus:¹⁶¹⁷ while waiting for Alexander’s attack, the Thebans find a spider’s web in the temple of Demeter. They ask for an

¹⁶⁰⁹ Even if with a different accent: cf. *Il.* II 519; for the same use, see also *H. Hom.* 4, 178; Simon. 125; Pind. *Olymp.* VI 48; Soph. *OT* 152.

¹⁶¹⁰ Cf. *Act. Ap.* 16.16; cf. *LSJ*, 1552.

¹⁶¹¹ Hesych. π 4315; *Sud.* π 3140; Phot. *Lex.* π 1522; *Lex. Seg.* π 355 13.

¹⁶¹² Cf. I 47, 1.

¹⁶¹³ Cf. *e Graecis conversa* 5.

¹⁶¹⁴ Cf. I 46.

¹⁶¹⁵ Cf. vv. 2395–2402. For further comments about the oracle and its different forms, see Aerts 2014, 385–386.

¹⁶¹⁶ Cf. *Alex.* 14, 6–7.

¹⁶¹⁷ Cf. XVII 10.

explanation from Delphi and receive the following oracle: σημεῖον τόδε πᾶσι θεοὶ φαίνουσι βροτοῖσι, / Βοιωτοῖς δὲ μάλιστα καὶ οἱ περιναιετάουσι, “the gods send this sign to all mortals, / but especially to the Boeotians and their neighbors”.¹⁶¹⁸ Three months later, when Alexander arrives at Thebes, a series of *omina* announces the outcome of the siege: one of them takes place in Delphi. As Diodorus writes, ἄλλοι δὲ ἦκον ἐκ Δελφῶν μηνύοντες ὅτι ὁ ἀπὸ Φωκέων ναός, ὃν ἰδρύσαντο Θηβαῖοι, ἡματωμένην ἔχων τὴν ὀροφὴν ὀρᾷται, “others came from Delphi and revealed that the temple of the Phocian spoils – which had been dedicated by the Thebans – was observed to have the roof stained with blood”.¹⁶¹⁹ Both the oracle and the signs announced the forthcoming ruin: someone comprehended the sign and suggested making peace with Alexander, but the Thebans did not listen.¹⁶²⁰ The rest is history. The work of Soterichus could have had one of those episodes as a subject. As an alternative – since Python was also a proper noun –, the mysterious title could refer to a specific person: ancient sources list six namesakes at least, and three of them were linked to the Macedonian royal family.¹⁶²¹ The first one is the orator Python of Byzantium, the pupil of Isocrates: he was in the service of Philip II and was sent as an envoy to Athens more than once between 346 and 342 BC.¹⁶²² According to Diodorus, he was sent to Thebes too on the eve of Chaeronea and tried (in vain) to convince the Thebans not to ally with the Athenians (339 BC).¹⁶²³ No other connection is attested between him and the Boeotian city; moreover, sources do not mention any link with Philip’s son.¹⁶²⁴ The second namesake is the poet Python of Catana, who accompanied Alexander into Asia and (supposedly) wrote the satiric

¹⁶¹⁸ Cf. XVII 10, 3.

¹⁶¹⁹ Cf. XVII 10, 5.

¹⁶²⁰ Cf. XVII 10, 6.

¹⁶²¹ The other three are an Athenian of the 4th c. BC (cf. Ath. *Deipn.* VI 246; XIII 583), a piper of the 3rd c. BC (cf. Plut. *Mor.* 184), and a slave-owner of the 2nd century BC (cf. Diod. XXXIV 2).

¹⁶²² Cf. *FGrHist* 324 T2b; Dem. XVIII 136; Ps. Dem. VII 20.

¹⁶²³ Cf. XVI 85, 3–4. Ellis (1976, 291, n. 4) suggested that Diodorus confused the embassy to Thebes with that to Athens of 344.

¹⁶²⁴ A passage of the rhetorician Valerius Apsines notes that Python felt out of favor after the death of Philip: cf. *Ars Rhet.* 341.

poem Ἀγὴν to entertain the army;¹⁶²⁵ the third is a boy kissed by Cassander in the presence of Alexander.¹⁶²⁶ They are scarcely identifiable with Soterichus' Python. Hypothesizing a corruption of the title reported by the Suda (Πείθων / Πίθων > Πύθων) offers other possible identifications: but taking them into account does not provide better results.¹⁶²⁷ As it is possible to see, in spite of the elimination of some alternatives, the absence of more detailed testimonies hinders giving a preference to one possibility in particular. But some interesting elements can come from the second title mentioned by the *Suda*. As a quick research in the *TLG* demonstrates, Ἀλεξανδριακός is a *hapax*. The absence of other attestations makes it difficult to determine the real meaning of the word. The presence of the suffix -ικο- / -κο- reveals it to be an adjective. The use of an adjective as the title of a work is typical of rhetorical production: the imperial age offers many examples of that.¹⁶²⁸ The hypothesis that the work of Soterichus was a λόγος is not supported only by the presence of Ἀλεξανδριακός, but also by the match of the adjective with the noun preceding it: Πύθων ἢ Ἀλεξανδριακός recalls – just to give an example – the title of the ninth oration of Dio Chrysostom, namely the Διογένης ἢ Ἰσθμικός (= *Orat.* IX). This parallel suggests that Python (whoever or whatever he / it was) was the protagonist of the work. For this reason, I would not follow the hypothesis of Kampe, the first to interpret Soterichus' work as a speech. He wrote: "Dies aber ist [...] eine *Rede*, die man dem Alexander in den

¹⁶²⁵ The authorship of the *Agēn* was already questioned by Atheneus, who listed Python of Byzantium and Alexander himself as alternative authors: cf. *Deipn.* II 50; XIII 586.

¹⁶²⁶ Cf. Plut. *Mor.* 180.

¹⁶²⁷ If the title of Soterichus' work were corrected in Πείθων or Πίθων, it could be referred to the satrap of Media (who was executed by Antigonos in 316 BC: cf. Lendering 2015a), or to the satrap of the Indus (who died in the battle of Gaza: cf. Lendering 2015b).

¹⁶²⁸ For instance, the orations of Dio Chrysostom (Ὀλυμπικός, Βορυσθεντικός, Κορινθιακός, etc.), Aelius Aristides (Παναθηναϊκός, Συμμαχικός, Λευκτρικός, Σμυρναϊκός πολιτικός, Ἐλευσίνιος, Αἰγύπτιος, etc.), and Themistius (Πρεσβευτικός, Ὑπατικός εἰς τὸν αὐτοκράτορα Ἰοβιανόν, Πενταετηρικός, Δεκετηρικός, etc.). Other sophists and rhetoricians could be listed here. I choose these three authors just because they represent the extremities of a long period of time (from the first century AD to the fourth); obviously, the list is not complete.

Mund legte, als habe er sie, nach der Einnahme Thebens, in Delphi gehalten" (1849, 142).¹⁶²⁹ I am inclined to think that if Alexander had been the main character of the speech, his name would be placed in the first position. Since the situation is different, Ἀλεξανδριακός could correspond to the topic of the speech, or to its context. On the one hand, it could refer to Alexander the Great; on the other, to the city of Alexandria. At first glance, what the *Suda* says about the subject of Soterichus' work seems to offer an argument in favor of the former possibility.¹⁶³⁰ However, there is something to add. An examination of the rhetorical production of the imperial and late antique age shows that – if the subject of a speech is a person (human, divine, or semi-divine) and this person is mentioned in the title – their name is reported either in the nominative, or with a preposition (e.g. περὶ).¹⁶³¹ Adjectives such as Ἀλεξανδριακός are normally used to indicate the context of speeches: for instance, the occasions of their performance, or the public they refer to.¹⁶³² For this reason, I suggest that Soterichus' *Python* was a speech pronounced in Alexandria. If the λόγος of Soterichus was pronounced in the Egyptian city (or referred to it), what was the meaning of Thebes? Did the poet choose to describe its destruction for a particular reason? According to the sources, the Boeotian city rose up against Alexander to reclaim its ancient autonomy (*croce e delizia* of every Greek *polis*). The Macedonian king marched with his army against the rebels, besieged their city and conquered it: in order to punish it in a cautionary way, he ordered his soldiers to destroy it. Such a sequence of events find an interesting parallel with the already mentioned Alexandrian rebellion at the end of the third century. While Galerius and Diocletian were fighting in Persia, the Egyptian province rose up under the guidance of the

¹⁶²⁹ According to the philologist, even the *Calydoniaca* were a prosastic text (cf. 1849, 142–143): given the form of the title and the subject, it is difficult to sustain. See the commentary to **TT 4, 5**.

¹⁶³⁰ Indeed, Janiszewski (2006, 155) sustained it.

¹⁶³¹ The three rhetorician I already quoted above can provide evidences of that: see, for instance, the Χρυσήϊς and the Περὶ Ὀμήρου of Dio Chrysostom; the Διόνυσος, the Ἡρακλῆς, and the Ἀθηνᾶ of Aristides; the Βασανιστὴς ἢ φιλοσοφός of Themistius.

¹⁶³² I already quoted the Λευκτρικός, the Συμυρναϊκός πολιτικός, the Ἐλευσίνιος, and the Αἰγύπτιος of Aristides. I could add also the Ῥωμαϊκός λόγος of Julius Pollux (cf. *Sud.* π 1951) and the Ἀντιοχικός of Libanius.

usurper Domitius Domitianus and the *corrector* Achilleus. Between October and November 297, Diocletian left the Persian front and reached Egypt with his soldiers. In a few months, the rebellion was suppressed in almost all the area. Alexandria was the last city to capitulate, after eight months of siege (298). For this reason, the emperor decided to make an example of its punishment. The city was sacked.¹⁶³³ According to John Malalas, the emperor entered the defeated metropolis on horse and ordered his army to carry out the massacre of the rebels until the blood of the victims reached its hocks. At a certain moment, though, Diocletian's horse slipped and the emperor's heels were stained with blood. Diocletian understood it to be a sign from the gods and ordered his men to stop the sacking. As the historian notes, καὶ ἀνέστησαν οἱ αὐτοὶ Ἀλεξανδρεῖς στήλην χαλκῇν τῷ ἵππῳ ὑπὲρ εὐχαριστίας ("as a sign of gratitude, the same Alexandrians erected a bronze monument to the horse").¹⁶³⁴ The terrible image emerging from the pages of the *Chronographia* is not echoed by other documents. The base of the porphyry column left by Diocletian in Alexandria before his return to the east, addressed him as "the most just Emperor, the savior of Alexandria" (τὸ[ν] τιμιώτατον αὐτοκράτορα / τὸν πολιῦχον Ἀλεξανδρείας).¹⁶³⁵ The same focus on *clementia* is shown by the western rhetorician Eumenius: in the *Panegyric for the Restoration of the Schools* (Lyon, 297–298 AD), he portraits the madness of Egypt peacefully subject *sub tua, Diocletiane Auguste, clementia*, "to your clemency, Diocletian Augustus".¹⁶³⁶ It is clear from these testimonies that the official image spread by the imperial propaganda after the Egyptian rebellion was quite distant from the bloody representation of Byzantine sources: the most important feature shown by the emperor in the reconquest of Alexandria was his mercy; he could punish the rebel city, but he did not. He did not behave like Alexander with Thebes. In my opinion, that is the central point. Describing the destruction of Thebes by Alexander the Great allowed Soterichus to highlight the differences

¹⁶³³ For further information about the Egyptian revolt, cf. Thomas 1976, 253–279; Thomas 1977, 233–240; Barnes 1996, 532–552; Kuhoff 2001, 184–198; Roberto 2014, 114–118.

¹⁶³⁴ Cf. XII 41.

¹⁶³⁵ Cf. Thiel 2006, 255–258.

¹⁶³⁶ Cf. *Pan. Lat.* 5 (9) 21.2.

between the bloody behavior of the Macedonian king and the merciful approach of his Roman counterpart. The comparison between the destiny of Thebes and that of Alexandria turned itself into a confrontation between Alexander and Diocletian, to the latter's advantage.¹⁶³⁷ If my hypothesis is correct – and the speech of Soterichus really aimed to celebrate the clemency of the emperor after the Egyptian rebellion –, it is possible to propose a dating for its execution. The Egyptian celebrations of 301–302 could have provided an excellent background: the emperor was in Alexandria to celebrate the successes of the Persian expedition and to reconcile with Egypt. The pronunciation of the *Python* could have taken place in front of the emperor and the members of his court.

καὶ ἄλλα: two of these undetermined “other works” are quoted by Stephanus (cf. **T3**) and John Tzetzes (cf. **TT 4, 5**).

T 2

Source date: tenth century AD.

Βασσαρικὰ ἦτοι Διονυσιακὰ ἔγραψε Σωτήριχος, γεγονὼς ἐπὶ Διοκλητιανοῦ: the mention of Soterichus comes from an entry dedicated to the adjective βασσαρικός (= βακχικός, θιάσος).¹⁶³⁸ The *Suda* reports two forms of it: the plural neuter βασσαρικά and the singular genitive βασσαρικοῦ. Both are accompanied by literary references exemplifying their use. The Dionysian poem of Soterichus is associated with the former; a line of the epigrammatist Phalaecus with the latter.¹⁶³⁹ Scholars have never edited this passage as a testimony on

¹⁶³⁷ For an analysis of the Roman interest in Alexander (from the late Republic to Hadrian), see Spencer 2002. For a wider perspective on the Macedonian's influence, see the studies collected by Heckel–Tritle 2009.

¹⁶³⁸ Cf. *LSJ*, 310.

¹⁶³⁹ The mysterious poet supposedly flourished at the end of the fourth century BC: cf. Albani 2000. Only five texts of his production have survived: cf. *AP* VI 165; VII 650; XIII 5, 6, 27. The line cited by the *Suda* (στρεπτὸν Βασσαρικοῦ ῥόμβον θιάσιοιο μύωπα) opens the first of these epigrams. According to the lexicographer, it uses the adjective βασσαρικός as a synonym of πορνικός (‘of

Soterichus. Indeed, it just anticipates some information of **T1**, namely the title of his poem and the Tetrarchic background of his activity.

T 3

Source date: sixth century AD.

Ῥασις, πόλις Λιβύης, λέγεται καὶ Ῥασις καὶ ὁ πολίτης Ῥασίτης: while introducing the city of Soterichus, Stephanus provides two different versions of its name, Ῥασις and Ῥασις. In all probability, the two forms are due to the difficult Greek transcription of the Egyptian original: Demotic *wh't*, Coptic *wah(e)*.¹⁶⁴⁰ Other attested variants such as Strabo's αὔασεις¹⁶⁴¹ and the late ὠασις¹⁶⁴² derive from the same phenomenon. Interestingly enough, the form in ασα- is also reported by Stephanus, who attributes it to a πόλις Αἰγύπτου, apparently different from that of Soterichus.¹⁶⁴³ According to the ethnographer, ταύτην δὲ καὶ Ῥασιν καλοῦσιν. The separation between Ῥασις and Αὔασις can be explained in two different ways: either it is the result of Stephanus' confusion, or it reflects a real situation. In the former case, Stephanus attributed two transcriptions of the same Egyptian name to distinct places. In the latter, he effectively made reference to two oases of the western desert.¹⁶⁴⁴ Two elements in particular point to a mistake by the Byzantine: a) the phonetic ambiguity of the city name, which could be transcribed in different ways; b) the mention – in both the entries – of the alternative form Ῥασις. Moreover, there is also the testimony of Pseudo-Herodian, who quoted the two entries of the *Ethnica* and wrote: Αὔασις, πόλις Αἰγύπτου· ταύτην δὲ καὶ Ῥασιν καὶ Ῥασιν καλοῦσιν

or for harlots': cf. *LSJ* 1450). The same line is quoted in other three entries of the *Suda*: cf. θ 379; ρ 223; σ 1193.

¹⁶⁴⁰ Cf. Osing 2000; *BNJ* 641, T2.

¹⁶⁴¹ Cf. II 5, 33.

¹⁶⁴² Cf. Athan. *HA* 72, 2,3; *Chron. Pasch.* 62, 12; etc.

¹⁶⁴³ Cf. s.v. Αὔασις (α 533 Billerbeck).

¹⁶⁴⁴ If so, Αὔασις and Ῥασις might be identified with the Ῥασις Μεγάλη and the Ῥασις Μικρά, i.e. the main oases of the western desert (along with Siwa: cf. **T1**). One could go even further. Αὔασις could correspond to the former oasis: the identity is revealed by Stephanus' reference to Herodotus (III 26).

(“Auasis, city of Egypt: they call it also Oasis and Yasis”).¹⁶⁴⁵ The grammarian must have taken the passages of Stephanus as descriptions of the same settlement. This interpretation might cast new light on the identification of Soterichus’ city. Indeed, Stephanus concludes the entry on Αὔασις with a quote of Herodotus naming it “the island of blessed” (Μακάρων νῆσος).¹⁶⁴⁶ The passage describes the Persian expedition against the Ammonians and refers to the “Θασις Μεγάλη”.¹⁶⁴⁷ Stephanus identifies it with Αὔασις. Therefore, if Ὑασις corresponded with Αὔασις, and Αὔασις with the “Θασις Μεγάλη, then Ὑασις would coincide with the “Θασις Μεγάλη”.¹⁶⁴⁸ Unfortunately, the common Egyptian origin of the name is not enough to prove the identity of Ὑασις and Αὔασις; as Strabo notices, the Egyptian original was commonly used to name oases in general.¹⁶⁴⁹ The testimony of Stephanus does not provide clear elements to determine Soterichus’ homeland.

ὁ ποιητὴς Σωτήριχος: the reading of the passage is quite problematic. The name of Soterichus and his characterization as the poet who wrote the *Patria of Oasis* are juxtaposed to the preceding text, without any particle introducing them. Van Berkel was the first to note that and proposed to integrate the passage with an <ὥς>.¹⁶⁵⁰ Another hypothesis was offered by Jacoby, who suggested inserting either an <οὕτως>, or the words <Θασίτης καὶ>.¹⁶⁵¹ Other editors such as Westerman,¹⁶⁵² Meineke,¹⁶⁵³ and Billerbeck¹⁶⁵⁴ left the text as it was. Reading the entry, one could hardly deny that it is missing something. However, in order to decide if and how to intervene, it is necessary to determine whether the

¹⁶⁴⁵ *Pros. Cath.* 102, 30–31 Lentz.

¹⁶⁴⁶ Cf. Hd. III 26.

¹⁶⁴⁷ Cf. Asheri – Lloyd – Corcella 2007, 426–427.

¹⁶⁴⁸ Schubert arrived to the same conclusion: «without any additional qualification, Ὑασις must be the Great Oasis, or Oasis of the Thebaid, in the western desert of Egypt» (*BNJ* 641, T2).

¹⁶⁴⁹ Cf. II 5, 33; XVII 1, 5. The information is reported by Stephanus too: τὰ τοιαῦτα αὐάσεις Αἰγύπτιοι φασί (s.v. Αὔασις, [α 533 Billerbeck]).

¹⁶⁵⁰ Cf. 1688, 723.

¹⁶⁵¹ Cf. *FGrHist* 641, T2.

¹⁶⁵² Cf. 1839, 287.

¹⁶⁵³ Cf. 1849, 644.

¹⁶⁵⁴ Cf. 2015, 362.

lack is due to the textual tradition, or to the epitomist. In the former case, one might apply the corrections proposed by the scholars (all of them, on different levels, are plausible);¹⁶⁵⁵ in the latter case, the text should be left as it is.¹⁶⁵⁶ Since both positions can be supported by examples from the *Ethnica*, it is quite hard to prefer one to the other. For this reason, I decided to maintain the text as it is, taking note of the possible lacuna in the critical apparatus.

ὁ καὶ τὰ πάτρια γεγραφώς αὐτῆς: the text of the manuscripts mentions Soterichus *and the one* who wrote the *patria* (καὶ ὁ τὰ πάτρια γεγραφώς). Almost surely, the separation between the Egyptian poet and the author of the *Patria of Oasis* is the result of a misreading. If Stephanus had wanted to distinguish ὁ τὰ πάτρια γεγραφώς from Soterichus, he would have also inserted the name of the former. Since he did not include it, two possibilities present themselves: either the name of the second author has been lost, or it was never inserted. The latter possibility is the most reliable: Soterichus and the poet of the *Patria of Oasis* are the same person. The reading of the manuscript can be emended in two different ways: a) by removing the uncomfortable conjunction (as suggested by Jacoby);¹⁶⁵⁷ b) by correcting ὁ καὶ into καὶ ὁ.¹⁶⁵⁸ The latter solution does not require removing any part of the text,

¹⁶⁵⁵ From a statistical point of view, the insertion of Van Berkel is the most probable. The epitome of the *Ethnica* often uses the form ὡς + name of an author to introduce the literary authorities of its entries (e.g. s.v. Ἀβαντίς [α 3 Billerbeck], Ἄβροι [α 14 Billerbeck], Ἀβρότονον [α 15 Billerbeck], Ἀγάθη [α 21 Billerbeck], Ἀγυλλὰ [α 51 Billerbeck], Βούρχανις [β 152 Billerbeck], Ζεφύριον [ζ 17 Billerbeck], Κώμη [κ 310 Billerbeck], etc.). In this case, Soterichus could be quoted as the source of the variants Ὅασις / Ὅασίτης. Indeed, the same form is used by the *Suda* while introducing him (cf. **T1**). Less reliable, but still of value is the former proposal of Jacoby: the particle οὕτως would present Soterichus as a πολίτης Ὅασίτης, providing an example to the preceding list of variants. The latter suggestion is quite intrusive and inelegant, but possible.

¹⁶⁵⁶ The same elliptical structure is presented by other entries of the *Ethnica* (e.g. s.v. Μάταυρος [μ 97 Billerbeck], Τέως [τ 107 Billerbeck], etc.). That could mean that: a) all these examples have lost something, like the entry on Yasis; b) the basic quote of a source/example without any syntactic connection to the preceding sentence is one of the stylistic features of Stephanus' epitomist.

¹⁶⁵⁷ Cf. *FGrHist* 641, T2.

¹⁶⁵⁸ So Holste 1692, 334.

follows the stylistic *usus* of Stephanus (who often resorts to the substantive use of participles: see, for instance, s.v. Δουλίχιον, Ἰάσος, Ὀινειάδαι), and confirms what we know about Soterichus (who wrote *also* the *Patria of Oasis*). For these reasons, I accepted it in my edition. Another textual difficulty comes from the pronoun referring to τὰ πάτρια. The two manuscripts reporting it – i.e. the *Rehdigeranus* 47 (= R) and the *Vaticanus Palatinus graecus* 253 (= Q) – have the genitive masculine singular (αὐτοῦ); the *Vaticanus Palatinus graecus* 57 (= P) and the *Neapolitanus* III. AA. 18 (= N) do not have anything instead. Van Berkel,¹⁶⁵⁹ Holste,¹⁶⁶⁰ Westerman,¹⁶⁶¹ and Billerbeck¹⁶⁶² followed the reading of P and N. Meineke preferred that of R and Q;¹⁶⁶³ his example was followed by Radicke too.¹⁶⁶⁴ Since the masculine pronoun does not fit the preceding text (both the names Ὑάσις and Ὀάσις are feminine), Jacoby corrected it (αὐτοῦ > αὐτῆς).¹⁶⁶⁵ As this brief list reveals, there are two main problems emerging from the passage: the presence of the pronoun and its gender. In order to solve them, it is necessary to analyze the connection between the various manuscripts. The most recent *stemma codicum* of Stephanus' tradition provides an excellent basis for the examination.¹⁶⁶⁶ As one can see, the two manuscripts with αὐτοῦ in their text (R and Q) belong to different branches of the tradition. P and N are part of the same branch instead: the latter derives from the former. *Rebus sic stantibus*, it would be very hard to say that the copyists of R and Q independently added the same (wrong) pronoun to the text they had received. It must have already been there. Given the structure of the *stemma*, if the same reading was common to the branches of R and Q, it must have been shared by that of P as well. In all probability, P (or another intermediary between P and ψ) removed the pronoun, and N followed it. But what was the gender of the pronoun? As already noted, the masculine αὐτοῦ does not fit with the feminine subject of the entry.

¹⁶⁵⁹ Cf. 1688, 723.

¹⁶⁶⁰ Cf. 1692, 333.

¹⁶⁶¹ Cf. 1839, 287.

¹⁶⁶² Cf. 2015, 362.

¹⁶⁶³ Cf. 1849, 644.

¹⁶⁶⁴ Cf. *FGrHist* 1080, T2.

¹⁶⁶⁵ Cf. *FGrHist* 641, T2; see also *BNJ* 641, T2.

¹⁶⁶⁶ Cf. Billerbeck 2006, 29*.

If we tried to find other matches in the preceding words, we should link it either to the πολίτης Ὀασίτης, or to the ποιητής Σωτήριχος. Both attempts are scarcely convincing. Therefore, either the hypothetical lacuna before the name of Soterichus included another masculine name, or the form of the pronoun is corrupted. The second possibility seems more reliable: most likely, Jacoby's correction *ope ingenii* is correct. When the hypothetical corruption took place is difficult to say. One could presume that the scribes of R and Q received a correct text, and later changed the reading in the same way, but that would be scarcely plausible. Such an operation would have been more likely if the change had been made from an incorrect reading to a correct one. But hypothesizing the production of the same mistake in two different branches of the tradition is quite hazardous. So, let us suppose that the change took place before the copyists of R, Q, and P started writing. As the *stemma codicum* reveals, the corrupted text should be placed between the archetype and ψ. It is not possible to be more precise. Besides Stephanus, no other source explicitly quotes Soterichus' *Patria of Oasis*. As already seen, Bidez identified it with the poem reported by *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481.¹⁶⁶⁷ This hypothesis found the support of Wilamowitz Moellendorf¹⁶⁶⁸ and Janiszewski (who latterly changed his mind¹⁶⁶⁹), but cannot be accepted. Hermes' foundation is to be identified with Hermopolis Magna (the modern *Khmun*), not with Oasis (cf. **n.** 4). Another interesting hypothesis was made by Janiszewski, who proposed to consider Soterichus' *patria* one of the sources of Olympiodorus of Thebes.¹⁶⁷⁰ As the summary of Photius testifies, the historian devoted a section of his work to the Ὀασίς Μεγάλη: he gave a geographical presentation of the region, with a special focus on its παράδοξα (e.g. the trees always in fruit, or the absence of epileptics); then, he explained the

¹⁶⁶⁷ Cf. 1903, 465–467.

¹⁶⁶⁸ Cf. 1942, 200–203.

¹⁶⁶⁹ See Derda–Janiszewski 2002, 65 for the former approach, and Janiszewski 2006, 225–226 for the latter.

¹⁶⁷⁰ Cf. 2006, 226–228. For an introduction to the historian, see Liebeschuetz 2003, 201–206; further information in Thomson 1944; Matthews 1970; Baldwin 1980; Gillett 1993; Baldini 2004; Van Nuffelen 2013. Critical edition of the fragments in Blockley 1983, 151–220.

Herodotean link to the Island of the Blessed.¹⁶⁷¹ Janiszewski observed that the “passage [...] bears some features characteristic for works of the *πάτρια* type [...]. His account appears to be a great appraisal of a place that used to be the mythical Isles of the Blessed and Homer’s homeland” (2006, 227). The presentation of Oasis is one of the few sections of the *Ὑλὴ ἱστορίας* focusing on the Roman east: indeed, the greatest part of Olympiodorus’ work concerned the western provinces of the empire.¹⁶⁷² As Van Nuffelen noted, “when Olympiodorus does include eastern material in his history, it is usually in relation to himself” (2013, 130).¹⁶⁷³ Looked at in this way, the fragment on the Egyptian oasis is no exception. It describes an area, which was not far from Thebes, that is, Olympiodorus’ birth place: it must not be discounted that it was part of an extended digression on the historian’s homeland.¹⁶⁷⁴ The idea that the verses of Soterichus lie behind Olympiodorus’ passage is not impossible. When the latter flourished, in the first half of the fifth century AD, the fame of the former was still alive. The two authors shared their Egyptian origin and (in this case at least) their interest in Egyptian antiquities. The enthusiastic representation of Oasis as a prosperous land full of extraordinary elements could be referred to the *Patria of Oasis* and to its celebratory aim. Some remarks must be made, though. Photius lists two sources of Olympiodorus’ digression, namely Herodotus and Herodorus, but does not say anything about Soterichus. Of course, the absence of a mention does not necessarily mean that the poet of Oasis was not used or named by Olympiodorus. However, it is an aspect we must take into account when analyzing the hypothesis of Janiszewski. Linking a passage to a source without any explicit reference, only on the base of a common theme, is quite hazardous. That becomes even more evident if we consider the contents of the text. We are not dealing with a marginal topic such as the islands of Cyzicus (cf. **n. 8, F2**), but with Egyptian antiquities. There is no need to say how

¹⁶⁷¹ Cf. F 32 Blockley.

¹⁶⁷² This western focus is shown by all the authors using Olympiodorus as their source: cf. Van Nuffelen 2013, 130.

¹⁶⁷³ The evidence of that is provided by the fragments 19 Blockley (on the embassy to the Hun Donatus), 28 Blockley (on the stay in Athens), and 35, 2 Blockley (on the visit to the Blemyes).

¹⁶⁷⁴ Cf. Blockley 1983, 218–219, n. 65.

strong the fascination for Egypt was in the Greek and Roman world. Olympiodorus could have found information about the oases in many sources: the miraculous fertility of the country – just to give an example – was part of the historiographical tradition since the time of Herodotus. Another difficulty comes from Photius’ summary, which attributes to Olympiodorus the presentation of three oases: *τρεις γάρ φησιν Ὀάσεις καὶ αὐτὸς εἶναι, δύο μεγάλας, τὴν μὲν ἐξωτέρω, τὴν δὲ ἐσωτέρω, καταντικρὺ κειμένας ἀλλήλαις, συντείνοντος εἰς ἑκατὸν σημεῖα τοῦ μεταξὺ διαστήματος. Ἔστι δὲ καὶ ἄλλη τρίτη μικρά, πολλῷ διαστήματι τῶν δύο κεχωρισμένη* (“he himself says that there are three Oases, two great ones, an outer and an inner, lying opposite and separated by a distance of about one hundred miles. There is also a third small one, a great distance from the other two”).¹⁶⁷⁵ If Soterichus was one of the sources of this passage, which of the three oases did he describe? Such a question is hard to answer: as already mentioned, the link between the poet and the Great Oasis is not the only possibility at disposal (see above). For all these aspects, I would take Janiszewski’s hypothesis with caution. That Soterichus was a source of Olympiodorus is not impossible; however, there are not enough elements to consider the link with the Ὑλὴ ἱστορίας more than a suggestive hypothesis.

T 4

Source date: twelfth century AD

τὸ δὲ πλάτος τῆς ἱστορίας Ὅμηρός φησι: the testimony comes from Tzetzes’ scholium to the *Alexandra* of Lycophron.¹⁶⁷⁶ At lines 479–493, the poem presents the Greek hero Agapenor of Arcadia, introducing him through a series of erudite images.¹⁶⁷⁷ At lines 486–487 in particular, Lycophron evokes the father of Agapenor, Poseidon’s son Ancaeus: he

¹⁶⁷⁵ Translation of Blockley 1983, 197.

¹⁶⁷⁶ For an introduction to these scholia, cf. Dickey 2007, 65.

¹⁶⁷⁷ E.g. the reference to the son of Lycaon, the king of Arcadia (v. 481), or to the antiquity of Arcadian people, «older than the moon» (v. 482: τῶν πρόσθε μηνὸς φηγίνων). The use of difficult – if not obscure – references is typical of Lycophron: see the papers collected by Cusset–Prioux 2009.

participated in the Calydonian boar hunt and was killed by the beast.¹⁶⁷⁸ The commentary of Tzetzes summarizes the episode: ἦν γὰρ Ἀγαπήνωρ ὁ υἱὸς Ἀγκαίου. οὗτος δὲ ἐπὶ τὸν Καλυδώνιον κάπρον ἐξελθὼν ἀνῆρέθη ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ (“Agapenor was the son of Ancaeus. He went against the Calydonian boar and was killed by it”). The mention of Homer and Soterichus comes at this point of the scholium: Tzetzes notes that the two poets already narrated τὸ [...] πλάτος τῆς ἱστορίας. Then he moves forward, giving other information and concluding the note (see below). The myth of the Calydonian boar is reported in the ninth book of the *Iliad*: the Myrmidon Phoenix – who participated to the hunt – narrates it to convince Achilles to re-enter battle.¹⁶⁷⁹ As a proof of the fact that Tzetzes had this Homeric passage in mind, a line of the same section is partially quoted by the grammarian to conclude the scholium (see below).

καὶ Σωτήριχος ἐν τοῖς Καλυδωνιακοῖς: the identification of this Soterichus with the third-century namesake is not certain. As noted by Schubert, it rests on two points: first, on “the plausible assumption that the Καλυδωνιακά was an epic poem”; and the second, on the fact that “the name Soterichos is [...] seldom found in literature” (*BNJ* 641 F1). These elements are not enough to reach safe conclusions: a couple of remarks must be made, though. First, a poem on the Calydonian boar fits perfectly the production of a late-imperial ἐποποιός: the topic was not unusual in late antiquity (see below). Second, Tzetzes’ deep erudition makes a quote of Soterichus not impossible:¹⁶⁸⁰ the *Scholia* make references to other late antique authors such as Oppian¹⁶⁸¹ and Theon;¹⁶⁸² nothing impedes a quote of Soterichus too. Moreover, the mention of the epic poet did not require a direct knowledge of his works: Tzetzes could have found his name in a commentary on the

¹⁶⁷⁸ Lyc. *Alex.* 486–487: οὗ φῖτυν ἠνάριξεν Οἰταῖος στόνουξ / βουβῶνος ἐν τόρμαισι θρυλίξας δέμας («the tusk of Oeta slew his father / and crushed his body in the regions of groin»). For further information about the myth and its literary uses, see Grossardt 2001.

¹⁶⁷⁹ Cf. IX 529–549.

¹⁶⁸⁰ Further information about Tzetzes’ literary knowledge in Braccini 2010.

¹⁶⁸¹ Cf. *Schol. Lycoph. Alex.* 796.

¹⁶⁸² Cf. *Schol. Lycoph. Alex.* 1017, 1236, 1389.

Iliad.¹⁶⁸³ That would justify the fact that Soterichus is always quoted with Homer. To summarize: the testimony mentions a Soterichus, whose work could easily be attributed to our poet; the author of the quote had the culture and the practical possibilities to know him, either through an intermediary source, or directly from his poetical composition. For all these reasons, I decided to follow Jacoby, inserting Tzetzes' references among the testimonies on Soterichus.

λέγει: after the mention of Homer and Soterichus, the scholium provides other information about the Calydonian boar. It reveals the movements of the beast and the reason for its coming, quoting a line from the *Iliad*: ὁ δὲ Καλυδώνιος σῦς πρῶτον μὲν περὶ τὴν Οἴτην διατρίβων, ἦλθεν εἰς Αἰτωλίαν Ἀρτέμιδος μῆνιδι, ὅτι οὐκ ἔθυσεν αὐτῇ ὁ Οἰνεὺς· “ἄλλοι δὲ θεοὶ δαίνυνθ’ ἑκατόμβας” (*Il.* IX 535). Οἰταῖος οὖν ἐκεῖνος καλεῖται, ἀπὸ τῆς Οἴτης (“the Calydonian boar used to reside on the Oeta; it arrived in Aetolia for the wrath of Artemis, because Oeneus had not sacrificed to her, “having offered hecatombs to the other gods”. For this reason it is called Oetaeus, from Oeta”). The interpretation of the passage depends on the meaning of the verb preceding it. The λέγει¹⁶⁸⁴ following the mention of Soterichus can be interpreted in three different ways: a) as a verb taking the accusative which opens the sentence (i.e. τὸ [...] πλάτος τῆς ἱστορίας); b) as a verb taking the following text: λέγει· ὁ δὲ Καλυδώνιος σῦς κ.τ.λ.; c) as a verb preceding a lacuna.¹⁶⁸⁵ The first possibility was supported by Radicke, who translated the passage as follows: “and Soterichus speaks about it in his *Calydoniaka*”.¹⁶⁸⁶ This reading creates a parallel between λέγει and the preceding φησι: they both refer to the same object. However, such a use of λέγω is quite unusual in Tzetzes' works.¹⁶⁸⁷ The second interpretation

¹⁶⁸³ To use the words of Dickey, Tzetzes «drew heavily on the old scholia» (2007, 65).

¹⁶⁸⁴ Λέγων in some of the manuscripts: cf. Müller 1811, 642 (n. 12).

¹⁶⁸⁵ There is also a fourth possibility, namely that λέγει is absolute: however, given the normal uses of the verb, this hypothesis is highly improbable.

¹⁶⁸⁶ Cf. *FGrHist* 1080, T3a.

¹⁶⁸⁷ A *TLG*-examination of the recurrences of λέγω in Tzetzes' *corpus* shows that.

was sponsored by Potter,¹⁶⁸⁸ Müller,¹⁶⁸⁹ and Voss,¹⁶⁹⁰ and opens interesting perspectives. If the text following λέγει is a direct quote of Soterichus, it means that he did not write a poem, but a prose text. One can go even further: given the Homeric quote included in the fragment, the *Calydoniaca* could be considered an exegetic text rather than an original composition. Such a view collides with the image of Soterichus emerging from other sources: writing a mythography (or a similar kind of treatise) is something we would expect from a grammarian or a sophist, not from an epic poet. One should exhume the idea that Tzetzes' source and the poet of Oasis are not the same person. However, two elements must be highlighted. From a stylistic viewpoint, the hypothetical quote of Soterichus is not different from the rest of the scholium. This stylistic homogeneity is suspect: if the authorship were not the same, one could expect some differences in writing.¹⁶⁹¹ Equally suspect is the quote of the Homeric line: as already said, it comes from the same passage of the *Iliad* hinted at by the first part of the scholium. The best way to explain the stylistic uniformity and the cohesion of the two parts of the scholium is to attribute both of them to the same author, i.e. to Tzetzes. That leads to the third possibility I mentioned at the beginning: what we read belongs only to Tzetzes (and Homer); the quote of Soterichus – originally introduced by λέγει – has been lost. The hypothesis of a lacuna was supported by Scheer,¹⁶⁹² Jacoby,¹⁶⁹³ and Schubert,¹⁶⁹⁴ and has a good chance of being correct. For this reason, I do not consider the second half of the scholium a fragment of Soterichus' work.

¹⁶⁸⁸ Cf. 1697, 58.

¹⁶⁸⁹ Cf. 1811, 642.

¹⁶⁹⁰ Cf. Westermann 1838, 293.

¹⁶⁹¹ Tzetzes' reworking is a possible explanation for this stylistic homogeneity: the grammarian could have summarized what Soterichus wrote about the Calydonian boar. In that case, however, we should expect a different construction, namely the accusative + infinitive. The use of the nominative with a defined verb suggests either a direct quote, or the normal continuation of the scholium.

¹⁶⁹² Cf. 1908, 175.

¹⁶⁹³ Cf. *FGrHist* 641, F1.

¹⁶⁹⁴ Cf. *BNJ* 641, F1.

Source date: twelfth century AD

Σωτήριχος καὶ Ὅμηρος καὶ ἄλλοι δὲ μυρίοι περὶ τοῦ κάπρου μέμνηνται τοῦδε τοῦ Καλυδῶνος: the expression καὶ ἄλλοι δὲ μυρίοι is attested four times in Tzetzes' *Chiliades*.¹⁶⁹⁵ In all probability, the repeated use of it depends on its metrical structure (= three iambic feet + an unstressed syllable), which makes it suitable to close the political verse of Tzetzes' poem.¹⁶⁹⁶ Many of the "countless" literary works concerning the Calydonian boar are cited (or partially preserved) by ancient sources. Just to offer a couple of examples from late antiquity, one could mention Colluthus' *Calydoniaca* (composed between the fifth and the sixth centuries AD)¹⁶⁹⁷ and the brief poetic fragment on the θεσπέσιος σῦς reported by *P. Oxy.* LXXII 4852 (written in Egypt between the third and the fourth centuries AD).¹⁶⁹⁸ The poem of Colluthus has the same title as Soterichus'. Gonis pointed it out and wrote: "that two poets from Upper Egypt are transmitted as authors of epic poems with the same title has a suspicious ring, and one may entertain the thought that Colluthus is a mistake for Soterichus or vice versa; but compare the case of Βασσαρικά, title of works by Dionysius and allegedly by Soterichus" (2008, 25). As the finale note of the scholar admits, his suspicions are not justified. The form of the title as it is reported by the *Suda* and Tzetzes is not particularly strange, and could have been easily chosen by poets writing on the Calydonian boar. Furthermore, that Soterichus and Colluthus wrote poems on the same topic is not problematic at all: it simply reveals that their subject achieved great success in late antique Egypt. In other words, it demonstrates how integrated Soterichus was in

¹⁶⁹⁵ Beyond the passage in matter, see V 20, 99; VI 60, 522; VII 154, 935.

¹⁶⁹⁶ The political verse (also known as decapentasyllabic verse) is one of the most common meters of Byzantine literature. It is composed by fifteen syllables, usually (but not always) divided in seven iambic feet followed by an unstressed syllable. The cesura is normally placed after the fourth feet. Further information in Kambylis 1995, 38–67.

¹⁶⁹⁷ Cf. *Sud.* κ 1951. For further information about Colluthus, cf. Livrea 1968; Orsini 1972; Minniti Colonna 1979; Nardelli 1982; Montes Cala 1987–1988; Schönberger 1993; Miguélez Caverio 2008, 28–29; Agosti 2012.

¹⁶⁹⁸ Cf. Gonis 2008, 25–26.

the cultural *Zeitgeist* of his age. From this perspective, the choice of the Calydonian boar could provide another support for identifying the source of Tzetzes as the poet of Oasis.

12.

ULPIAN

(FGrHist 676; BNJ 676)

Introduction

Suffering the fate of other protagonists of late antiquity, the sophist Ulpian has seen his memory progressively erased by time. The scanty testimonies about him do not do justice to the important role he had in late antique Antioch. His preeminence in the cultural panorama of the fourth century AD is revealed by the testimony of Evagrius, who mentions him alongside great figures such as Libanius and Julian of Caesarea. The two rhetoricians shared with Ulpian an interest in the antiquities of Antioch: the subject must have found a space in the pages of all three (cf. **T1**). The same focus on local traditions emerges in the testimony of the *Suda*, attributing three *patria* to the hand of Ulpian. The encyclopedia dedicates two entries to the sophist: in the former, it introduces him as a citizen of Emesa; in the latter, it links him to Antioch (cf. **T2**). The birthplace of the sophist remains unknown. The hypothesis of Schemmel – identifying Ulpian as the Palestinian sophist who taught Libanius – cannot be proved, even if it is highly plausible that the Antiochean rhetorician knew our author (cf. **T3**).

If the provenance of Ulpian cannot be determined, the situation is different for his chronology. The *Suda* reports indeed that the sophist flourished during the reign of Constantine the Great. The note places the activity of Ulpian in the first decades of the fourth century AD (cf. **T1**). Such a contextualization is confirmed by the other testimonies, which highlight the rich social network of the sophist and his connections with the great names of his age. We have already mentioned Libanius: along with him, we can cite the Armenian Prohaeresius. He studied with Ulpian in Antioch and then moved to Athens. Having obtained the chair of rhetoric at the death of Julian of Caesarea, he taught students such as Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil the Great, and the emperor Julian (cf. **TT 4–5**). The last two testimonies on Ulpian involve his son Epiphanius – who

followed in the footsteps of his father and taught in Athens until he died (cf. **T6**) – and his little known rival Eusebius of Arabia (cf. **T7**).

Among the many titles attributed to Ulpian's hand, the most interesting are surely the three *patria* cited by the *Suda* (cf. **T1**). The first of the list – the *Patria of Emesa* (Πάτρια Ἐμεσηνῶν) – supposedly dates to the Phoenician period of Ulpian. As already said, we cannot determine whether he was born in the city, or moved there from another locality. We can only note that he was in Emesa before obtaining a chair in Antioch. Nothing impedes, though, that the *patria* was written in a later moment, when the sophist was already in the Syrian capital. Such a Syrian context allows us to identify the addressee of the second *patria*, Heliopolis. Two cities of the eastern empire were so named, one in Egypt, the other in Syria: it is highly probable that Ulpian's Πάτρια Ἡλιουπόλεως referred to the second one. The most intriguing title of the list is that of the *Patria of Bosphorus* (Πάτρια Βοσποριανῶν): dedicated to the Milesian colony of Panticapaeum, it involved the client kingdom of Bosphorus. Traditionally out of the "civilized" world, the realm was a fundamental Roman outpost in the Crimean peninsula: its importance from a strategic and economic point of view was so high, that Diocletian decided to include it within the empire. The process was not easy: if some of the Bosporans were favorable to it, a part of them maintained a hostile attitude (see below). In this light, Ulpian's *patria* could have been useful to reinforce the connection between the Bosporan kingdom and the Roman empire. Evoking the mythical links to the Hellenized world was particularly necessary in a marginal outpost surrounded by external forces and internally divided between pro- and anti-Roman groups (see below).

Testimonia

1. Evagr. HE I 20 (29, 3–7)

εἴ τῳ περισπούδαστον ταύτας εἰδέναι, ἱσθόρηται περιέργως Στράβωνι τῷ γεωγράφῳ, Φλέγοντί τε καὶ Διοδώρῳ τῷ ἐκ Σικελίας, Ἀρριανῷ τε αὖ καὶ Πεισάνδρῳ τῷ ποιητῇ, καὶ πρὸς γε Οὐλπιανῷ Λιβανίῳ τε καὶ Ἰουλιανῷ τοῖς παναρίστοις σοφισταῖς.

1. εἴ τῳ : A | εἴ δέ τῳ zv || 2. Ἀρριανῷ : zv | Ἀριανῷ A

If anyone had the desire to know them, they have been elaborately narrated by the geographer Strabo, Phlegon and Diodorus of Sicily; besides them, by Arrian and the poet Peisander; furthermore, by the most renown sophists Ulpian, Libanius, and Julian.

2. Sud. o 911–912

Οὐλπιανός, Ἐμεσηνός, σοφιστής. Πάτρια Ἐμεσηνῶν, Ἡλιουπόλεως, Βοσποριανῶν καὶ ἄλλων πλείστων, προγυμνάσματα, τέχνην ῥητορικὴν. Οὐλπιανός, Ἀντιοχεὺς τῆς Συρίας, σοφιστής, παιδεύσας πρότερον εἰς Ἐμεσαν, ἐν τοῖς κατὰ τὸν βασιλέα Κωνσταντῖνον χρόνοις. λόγους διαφόρους, μελέτας, διαλέξεις· καὶ ἄλλα τινά.

1. – 2. Ἐμεσηνός – ῥητορικὴν : AGSM | ὄνομα κύριον F || 1. Πάτρια : codd. | Περὶ πατρίδος Küster || 2. Βοσποριανῶν : cum Daub | Βοσποριατῶν codd. | Βοσποριτῶν Kuster in app. | Βουσιριτῶν Hermann | Διοσπολιτῶν Bernhardt in app. | Βοστραίων Gutschmid (apud Adler vidi) | †Βοσποριατῶν Jacoby || 3. – 5. Οὐλπιανός – τινά : GM | om. AFS

Ulpian, of Emesa, sophist. *Patria of Emesa, of Heliopolis, of Bosporans*, and of many others, *Progymnasmata, Rhetoric*. Ulpian, of Antioch in Syria, sophist; earlier, he had taught in Emesa, at the time of the emperor Constantine. Various speeches, exercises, discourses; along with them, many other things.

3. Lib. Ep. 1353, 1, 1–2 Foerster (149 Bradbury)

Δημητρίῳ.

Οὐλπιανοῦ μὲν οὗτος ἐταῖρος, πατὴρ δὲ ἡμετέρων ἐταίρων· δείξας δὲ ἐν δικαστηρίοις ῥώμην τῷ νόμῳ πέπαυται νῦν.

To Demetrius.

This man is a pupil of Ulpian and father of pupils of mine: having displayed his power in the courts of justice, he has now retired from the legal practice.

4. *Sud.* π 2375

Προαιρέσιος, Παγκρατίου, Καππαδόκης ἀπὸ Καισαρείας, σοφιστής, μαθητεύσας ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ παρὰ Οὐλπιανῶ. γέγονε δὲ πρὸ Λιβανίου κατὰ τὰς Ἀθήνας σοφιστεύων καὶ τιμῶν ἔτυχε τῶν μεγίστων τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος Κωνσταντίνου.

1. – 4. μαθητεύσας – Κωνσταντίνου : A^rGVM | om. F || **3.** τιμῶν : A^rGM | τιμῆς V

Prohaeresius, son of Pancratius, from Caesarea of Cappadocia, sophist, he studied in Antioch under the guidance of Ulpian. He lived before Libanius and was a sophist in Athens. He obtained from the emperor Constantine the greatest honors.

5. *Eun.* VS X 3, 3

νέον δὲ αὐτὸν ἐξ Ἀρμενίας ἀναστήσαντος τοῦ δαίμονος, καὶ πρὸς τὴν Ἀντιόχειαν διαβαλόντος (οὐ γὰρ ἐπεθύμησεν εὐθὺς τῶν Ἀθηνῶν, ἢ τε ἔνδεια παρελύπει τῶν χρημάτων· γεγωνὶς γὰρ ἄνωθεν καλῶς, τοῦτο ἡτύχει), καὶ πρὸς τὸν Οὐλπιανὸν κρατοῦντα τῆς Ἀντιοχείας ἐπὶ λόγοις ὠσθείς, καὶ παρελθὼν, εὐθὺς ἀνὰ τοὺς πρώτους ἦν.

When he was young, fate forced him out of Armenia and transferred him to Antioch. He did not long for Athens yet, because he felt ashamed for the lack of wealth: despite his high birth, he was unlucky in this respect. He hastened to Ulpian, the leading teacher of rhetoric in Antioch: as soon as he arrived, he was considered among the bests.

6. *Sud.* ε 2741

Ἐπιφάνιος, Οὐλπιανοῦ, Πετραῖος, σοφιστής· παιδεύσας ἐν τε αὐτῇ καὶ ἐν Ἀθήναις. κτλ.

Epiphanius, son of Ulpian, of Petra, sophist; he taught in that city and in Athens. Etc.

7. *Sud.* ε 3738

Εὐσέβιος, Ἀράβιος, σοφιστής, ἀντισοφιστεύσας καὶ αὐτὸς Οὐλπιανῶ.

Eusebius, Arab, sophist; as a sophist, he too was rival of Ulpian.

Commentary

T 1

Source date: sixth century AD.

εἴ τῳ περισπούδαστον ταύτας εἰδέναι: *HE* I 19 deals with Theodosius II's wife Aelia Eudocia. Evagrius evokes the Athenian origin of the empress, the conversion to Christianity and the conjugal life at the court of Constantinople.¹⁶⁹⁹ Having mentioned all these aspects, he describes the visit she paid to Antioch while moving to Jerusalem.¹⁷⁰⁰ Such a visit was solemnized by a public speech of the empress, who concluded it by paraphrasing a Homeric hexameter: Ὑμετέρης γενεῆς τε καὶ αἵματος εὐχομαι εἶναι ("I am proud to be of your race and blood").¹⁷⁰¹ As Evagrius notes, Eudocia aimed to stress the links between her homeland Athens and Antioch, τὰς ἐκ τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἐνταῦθα σταλείσας ἀποικίας αἰνιττομένη ("by referring to the colonists sent there from Greece").¹⁷⁰² According to the historian, the citizens were so thrilled with the oration, that they decided to dedicate a statue to the empress.¹⁷⁰³ The speech of Eudocia to the people of Antioch is interesting for two reasons: for its form and for the contents. Regarding the former point, Evagrius just cites the conclusive hexameter: such a quote raises the question of whether the rest of the speech was hexametric as well, or not. According to Ludwich, the whole oration of Eudocia was in heroic verse.¹⁷⁰⁴ The same was hypothesized by

¹⁶⁹⁹ The Athenian origin of the empress – particularly important if we consider her speech to the Antiocheans – has been discussed: cf. Whitby 2000, 48, n. 173.

¹⁷⁰⁰ It is not sure which visit Evagrius is referring to: Eudocia went to the Holy Land twice, in 438 and in the early 440s. In both occasions, she visited Antioch. Scholars such as Downey (1961, 450–452) and Holum (1982, 117) linked the public speech to the first visit; Whitby and Whitby (1989, 75, n. 251) opted for the second one: cf. Whitby 2000, 48, n. 172. The speech of the empress is mentioned also by the so-called *Tusculan Fragments* of Malalas (cf. F II, 15 Mai) and the *Chronicon Paschale* (585 Bonn).

¹⁷⁰¹ Cf. *Il.* VI 211.

¹⁷⁰² Cf. *HE* I 19 (29, 2–3).

¹⁷⁰³ Cf. *HE* I 19 (29, 7–9).

¹⁷⁰⁴ Cf. 1897, 10–13.

Livrea.¹⁷⁰⁵ It is not impossible: the Homeric *centones* of the empress are still available to show her poetical skills.¹⁷⁰⁶ It must be noted, though, that the insertion of Homeric quotes into prose speeches was a common practice in antiquity: Eudocia could have done the same.¹⁷⁰⁷ For the contents of the oration, Evagrius clearly says that the empress made reference to the kinship between Athens and Antioch: it means that she addressed the issue of the origin of Antioch. Among the original settlers of the city, the source mention some Athenians: such a component was a matter of pride for the Antiocheans, above all in late antiquity.¹⁷⁰⁸ These elements made Livrea interpret Eudocia's speech as *patria* of Antioch.¹⁷⁰⁹ I would suggest a different interpretation. The *Chronicon Paschale* presents Eudocia's oration as a λόγον ἐγκωμιαστικὸν εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν Ἀντιόχειαν πόλιν ("encomiastic speech for the city of Antioch").¹⁷¹⁰ As the passage makes clear, the empress visited Antioch and dedicated an encomium to it. Her speech could have been what the imperial rhetoricians defined as ἐπιβατήριος λόγος, the "speech of arrival". As Menander's handbook specifies, this kind of oration could be delivered while visiting a city. It was intended to praise the hosting community and to highlight the joy of the speaker for the kind welcome.¹⁷¹¹ Eudocia's reference to her connection with the Antiocheans met both goals: first, it celebrated the history of Antioch by stressing the connection with Athens; and second, it asserted the bliss of the empress, who felt "almost at home". The hexameter quoted by Evagrius was a final *captatio benevolentiae*, or – to use the efficacious words of Livrea – "una sorta di "Ich bin ein Berliner" tardoantico".¹⁷¹² The scholar provided a different interpretation of Eudocia's speech, linking it to her work *De Sancto Cypriano*: the poem should have constituted a present to the city of St. Cyprian and St. Justine (cf. 1998, 80–82). Given the explicit explanation of Evagrius, I prefer to follow the

¹⁷⁰⁵ Cf. 1998, 80.

¹⁷⁰⁶ For an introduction to Eudocia's poetical works, see Van Deun 1993.

¹⁷⁰⁷ See, for instance,

¹⁷⁰⁸ Cf. Downey 1961, 79–80.

¹⁷⁰⁹ Cf. 1998, *loc. cit.*

¹⁷¹⁰ The definition is echoed by the *Tusculan Fragments*: cf. Mai 1839, 15.

¹⁷¹¹ Cf. Men. II 377, 31–378, 4.

¹⁷¹² 1998, 80.

traditional interpretation, considering Eudocia's quote a reference to Athens. This reading allows also to call into question what Cameron suggested, i.e. that the empress wanted to present herself as an Antiochean.¹⁷¹³ Taking the Athenian reference into account, I would say the contrary: Eudocia did not introduce herself as an Antiochean, but approached the Antiocheans as Athenians. We have already seen that the people of Antioch were quite proud of their Athenian lineage (see above).

ιστόρηται περιέργως Στράβωνι τῷ γεωγράφῳ, Φλέγοντί τε καὶ Διοδώρῳ τῷ ἐκ Σικελίας, Ἀρριανῷ τε αὖ καὶ Πεισάνδρῳ τῷ ποιητῇ: Evagrius provides a list of authors dealing with the history of Antioch and, more specifically, with the origin of the Syrian city. According to Whitby, the historian did not consult all these writers, but found their names in an intermediate source.¹⁷¹⁴ The first author on the list is Strabo, who presents the foundation of Antioch in the sixteenth book of the *Geography*.¹⁷¹⁵ Then, the text cites Phlegon of Tralles,¹⁷¹⁶ Diodorus of Sicily,¹⁷¹⁷ Arrian,¹⁷¹⁸ and Peisander of Laranda.¹⁷¹⁹ As it is possible to see, the list is quite wide-ranging and includes works of different natures.

καὶ πρὸς γε Οὐλπιανῷ Λιβανίῳ τε καὶ Ἰουλιανῷ τοῖς παναρίστοις σοφισταῖς: the reference to three sophists of the fourth century AD concludes Evagrius' list. Along with Ulpian, the historian names Libanius and Julian of Athens. The former is one of the most important rhetoricians of the imperial age: he was born in Antioch in 314 to a noble family.¹⁷²⁰ Having studied Greek literature and rhetoric in his city and in Athens,¹⁷²¹ he moved to Constantinople, where he taught until

¹⁷¹³ Cf. 1982, 278.

¹⁷¹⁴ Cf. 2000, 48, n. 174.

¹⁷¹⁵ Cf. Str. XVI 2, 5, 750.

¹⁷¹⁶ Cf. *FGrHist* 257, F24.

¹⁷¹⁷ Cf. 21, 6.

¹⁷¹⁸ Cf. *FGrHist* 156, F174.

¹⁷¹⁹ Cf. F S6 Heitsch.

¹⁷²⁰ Cf. Lib. *Or.* I 2–3, 139, 144; *Ep.* 727, 947, 1036; Eun. *VS* XVI 1, 1.

¹⁷²¹ Cf. Lib. *Or.* I 5–9; XXXVI 11.

342/3.¹⁷²² He later spent some years in Nicomedia (344/5–348/9).¹⁷²³ Then, he returned by imperial order to Constantinople and worked there for another five years.¹⁷²⁴ In 354 he returned to Antioch, where he remained until his death.¹⁷²⁵ He was a close friend of the emperor Julian and had Theodore of Mopsuestia among his pupils.¹⁷²⁶ The profile of Julian of Caesarea is not as well-defined as that of Libanius. He was born in Caesarea of Cappadocia; flourishing under the emperor Constantine, he moved to Athens and taught there until his death.¹⁷²⁷ Among his students, he had the sophist Prohaeresius (cf. **T4**) and Diophantus, the future teacher of Libanius.¹⁷²⁸ In spite of the different amount of information, we can say that both Libanius and Julian were protagonists/central figures in the culture of their age. It is not by chance that Evagrius defines them as πανάριστοι σοφισταί (“the best sophists”). Since Ulpian is listed with them, we must hypothesize a similar status for him. We are not able to say if he wrote a local history of Antioch (as supposed by Janiszewski), or if he mentioned the origin of the city in one of his works.¹⁷²⁹ The same uncertainty concerns Julian. More can be said about Libanius. The sophist refers to the mythical origin of Antioch in his Ἀντιοχικός, the oration he dedicated to his mother city: there, he narrates the deeds of Triptolemus, who set out from Argos in search of Io.¹⁷³⁰

T 2

Source date: tenth century AD.

Ούλπιανός, Ἐμεσηνός, σοφιστής: the *Suda* dedicates two entries to Ulpian. The former introduces him as a sophist of Emesa; the latter as a

¹⁷²² Cf. Lib. *Or.* I 37; Eun. *VS* XVI 1, 6.

¹⁷²³ Cf. Lib. *Or.* I 51.

¹⁷²⁴ Cf. Lib. *Or.* I 74.

¹⁷²⁵ Cf. Lib. *Or.* I 94, 100–104; II 17; *Ep.* 409, 430; Eun. *VS* XVI 1, 8.

¹⁷²⁶ For an introduction to Libanius' life (and to the narration he provided of it), see Wintjes 2005 and Van Hoof 2014.

¹⁷²⁷ Cf. Eun. *VS* IX 1, 1; *PLRE* I, 469 (‘Julianus 5’).

¹⁷²⁸ Cf. Eun. *VS* IX 1, 3; XVI 1, 2–3; Lib. *Or.* I 15–26; *Sud.* λ 486.

¹⁷²⁹ Cf. Janiszewski 2006, 245.

¹⁷³⁰ Cf. *Or.* XI 44–51.

sophist of Antioch (see below). In spite of this difference, we can reasonably suppose that the two voices refer to the same character.¹⁷³¹ They both mention Emesa: the former Ulpian is defined Ἐμεσηνός, the latter taught in the city before moving to Antioch (see below). This kind of doubling is not uncommon in the *Suda*.¹⁷³² The presence of two different adjectives to indicate Ulpian's birthplace makes it clear that one of them must refer to something different. This is clear for the Ἀντιοχεὺς τῆς Συρίας of the second entry: the *Suda* presents Ulpian as an Antiochean, but adds that he taught before in another city. If Antioch is just a place in which Ulpian worked, one could consider Emesa the native city of the sophist. Yet, even this would be not assured. It is possible, indeed, that neither of the two epithets reveals the sophist's birthplace. Schemmel, for instance, suggested that the they both indicate working places of Ulpian.¹⁷³³ The hypothesis goes along with the scholar's wider interpretation, which identifies Ulpian as the (nameless) Ascalonian master of Libanius (cf. **T3**).

Πάτρια Ἐμεσηνῶν: the redaction of the *Patria of Emesa* is likely due to Ulpian's stay in the city. Placed on the bank of the Orontes, Emesa (the contemporary *Hims*) has always been on an important crossing of routes: the so-called *Hims gap* was indeed (and still is) the easiest way to reach the Mediterranean from the Persian Gulf. Emesa was also on the road connecting the trade center of Damascus with the rich settlement of Beroea (= Aleppo).¹⁷³⁴ The bond of the city with Palmyra – the most important center of the Mesopotamian route – was at the base of its economic development. The fall of its powerful neighbor in 273 AD affected Emesa as well: the city lost a part of its prestige, but maintained a strong importance at a regional level.¹⁷³⁵ Paganism was particularly tenacious there: a proof of that is provided by the first bishop Silvanus,

¹⁷³¹ Bernhardt (1853, 1217–1218) was the first to identify the two characters: before him, Küster (1705, 738) and Gaisford (1834, 2749) had just identified the second Ulpian with the namesake mentioned by Evagrius (cf. **T1**).

¹⁷³² See, for instance, the entries on Minucius Pacatus Irenaeus (εἰ 190; π 29) and Sillius Homerus (ο 254; σ 213).

¹⁷³³ Cf. 1917, 189.

¹⁷³⁴ See Elisséeff 2007.

¹⁷³⁵ Cf. Whitaker 2007, 172.

who could not live in the city, but was forced to stay in the neighboring villages.¹⁷³⁶ Among the pagan cults, that of the Sun was particularly strong: quoting a passage of the historian Philarchus, Athenaeus defines the inhabitants of Emesa *θύοντες τῷ Ἡλίῳ* (“those who make sacrifice to the Sun”).¹⁷³⁷ One could suppose that the god was mentioned also by Ulpian’s *patria*: he could have had a role in the foundation of the city.

Ἡλιουπόλεως: the Roman world included two different Heliopolis, one in Egypt (the modern *El Matareya*),¹⁷³⁸ the other in Phoenicia (= *Baalbek*).¹⁷³⁹ In spite of Janiszewski’s caution, the latter center is the best candidate for Ulpian’s *patria*: its proximity to both Emesa and Antioch provides good evidence for that.¹⁷⁴⁰ The city hosted one of the most illustrious sanctuaries of antiquity, that of *Jupiter Optimus Maximus Heliopolitanus*, “the best and greatest Jupiter of Heliopolis”. It included also an oracle: the prophecy it made to the emperor Trajan before the Parthian campaign is reported by Macrobius.¹⁷⁴¹ After the emperor Constantine had the temple closed, Heliopolis became a center of opposition to Christianity.¹⁷⁴² The redaction of Ulpian’s *patria* takes place in this context (see below): nothing argues that his poem – celebrating the pagan myths on the foundation of Baalbek – was not influenced by that. Along with the cult of Jupiter, Heliopolis particularly worshipped Venus and Mercury. The three gods formed a trinity, which was rooted in the pre-classical triad of Baal, Astarte, and Adon.¹⁷⁴³ These cults were likely present in Ulpian’s work, which must take account of the traditions of the city. Given the Greek identification between the Semitic Adon and Adonis, one could also hypothesize that

¹⁷³⁶ Cf. Eus. VII 13, 3–4.

¹⁷³⁷ Cf. *Deipn.* XV 48, 23.

¹⁷³⁸ For an introduction to the city, see Allen 2001.

¹⁷³⁹ For a panoramic over the history of Baalbek, see the studies of Jidejian 1975 and Fabbri 2000.

¹⁷⁴⁰ Janiszewski did not exclude that Ulpian wrote the *patria* of the Egyptian city: cf. 2006, 246. The possibility of an Egyptian *patria* goes along with the scholar’s idea that Ulpian wrote another Egyptian local history (see below).

¹⁷⁴¹ Cf. Sat. I 23, 13–14. For further information about the sanctuary, see Ruprechtsberger 1999.

¹⁷⁴² Cf. Leisten 1997.

¹⁷⁴³ Cf. Kropp 2010.

the latter was the protagonist (or, at least, one of the characters) of Ulpian's composition. Since, however, the sources do not mention any story involving the foundation of Baalbek, these ideas cannot be proven.

Βοσποριανῶν: the reference to the *Patria of the Bosporans* is the most interesting section of the fragment, not only from the textual point of view, but also from the historical one. For the former point, the reading of manuscripts is the *hapax* Βοσποριατῶν (supposedly meaning "dweller of Bosporus"). All the editors of the passage have accepted it.¹⁷⁴⁴ That did not prevent them from suggesting hypothetical corrections. As Janiszewski noted, these interventions can be divided into two groups: on the one hand, those who maintain the Bosporian context; on the other, those who refer to different regions.¹⁷⁴⁵ To the former group belong the corrections of Küster (Βοσποριτῶν)¹⁷⁴⁶ and Daub (Βοσποριανῶν);¹⁷⁴⁷ to the latter, those of Hermann (Βουσιριτῶν),¹⁷⁴⁸ Bernhardt (Διοσπολιτῶν),¹⁷⁴⁹ and Gutschmid (Βοστραίων).¹⁷⁵⁰ All the proposed cities in the latter group could be linked to a sophist living between Emesa and Antioch. The name Διόσπολις (literally, "the city of Zeus") can be assigned to four ancient cities: a) the Palestinian Lydda (the present-day *Lod*);¹⁷⁵¹ b) the Phrygian Laodicea on the Lycus (whose site is near the modern *Denizli*);¹⁷⁵² c) the Egyptian Hiw (= *Diospolis parva*; the modern *Hu*);¹⁷⁵³ d) the Egyptian Thebes (= *Diospolis Magna*; the present-day *Luxor*).¹⁷⁵⁴ The Βούσιρις suggested by Hermann could equally refer to many

¹⁷⁴⁴ Cf. Küster 1705, 738; Gaisford 1834, 2749; Bernhardt 1853, 1217 – 1218; Bekker 1854, 797; Adler 1931, 587. The only scholar who did not accept the reading of the manuscript is Jacoby: he reported the text with a crux (cf. *FGrHist* 676, T1 = F2).

¹⁷⁴⁵ Cf. 2006, 246.

¹⁷⁴⁶ Cf. 1705, *loc. cit.*

¹⁷⁴⁷ I did not find the original proposal: I found it cited by Adler 1931, *loc. cit.*

¹⁷⁴⁸ Even in this case, I could not determine Hermann's work reporting the correction: I found him cited by Bernhardt 1853, *loc. cit.*

¹⁷⁴⁹ Cf. 1853, *loc. cit.*

¹⁷⁵⁰ Another quote found in Adler 1931, *loc. cit.*

¹⁷⁵¹ Cf. Benzinger 1905a.

¹⁷⁵² Cf. Benzinger 1905b.

¹⁷⁵³ Cf. Sethe 1905b.

¹⁷⁵⁴ Cf. Sethe 1905a.

Egyptian cities: the Pharaonic *Djedu* is the most famous among them.¹⁷⁵⁵ The Βόσπρα of Gutschmid clearly indicates the capital of *Arabia Petraea*.¹⁷⁵⁶ None of these cities is excessively far from Syria: they could have gotten in contact with our Ulpian without difficulty. It must be noted, though, that the proposals of Bernahrddy, Hermann, and Gutschmid require quite an invasive intervention in the text: if the alternatives were implausible or likewise labored, one could take them into account. But things are not so: the text of the entry can work perfectly with a less drastic correction. This brings us to the hypotheses of Küster and Daub. Their proposals just change a letter of the reading of the manuscript: while the former removes an alpha, the latter replaces the tau with a ni. Both forms are attested. The entry of Stephanus concerning the Bosporus cites them: τὸ ἐθνικὸν Βοσπόριος καὶ Βοσποριανός καὶ Βοσπορανός καὶ Βοσπορηνός [...]. λέγεται καὶ Βοσπορίτης καὶ Βοσπορικός τὸ κτητικόν (‘the ethnic is Bosporius, Bosporian, Bosporan, and Bosporen [...]. The possessive is Bosporite and Bosporic’).¹⁷⁵⁷ The passage of the *Ethnica* allows us to go a bit further: the form Βοσποριανός is listed among the possible ἐθνικά, i.e. the possible ethnic names. The alternative Βοσπορίτης is cited among the κτητικά instead, that is, among the possessive adjectives.¹⁷⁵⁸ The specification shows that the former alternative was normally used to indicate those living on the Bosporus, the latter to indicate something belonging to the region: it is not by chance that a classical author such as Sophocles speaks of a Βοσπορίτης fish.¹⁷⁵⁹ Such a difference was likely still active in Ulpian’s time: indeed, Βοσπορίτης is not attributed to the

¹⁷⁵⁵ For a list of the Egyptian cities, see Sethe 1899. For further information about *Djedu*, whose site is near the contemporary *Abu Sir Bana*, see Gomaà 1997.

¹⁷⁵⁶ The contemporary *Busrā*: for an introduction to the city, see Leisten 1997.

¹⁷⁵⁷ Cf. *Ethn.* s.v. Βόσπορος (β 130 Billerbeck).

¹⁷⁵⁸ For a better comprehension of the concept, see the definition of Dionysius Thrax (*Ars Gram.* I 1, 26, 7–9): Κτητικὸν δέ ἐστι τὸ ὑπὸ τὴν κτῆσιν πεπτωκός, ἐμπεριελημμένου τοῦ κτήτορος, οἷον † Νηλήϊοι ἵπποι <Λ 597>, Ἐκτόρεος χιτῶν <Β 416>, Πλατωνικὸν βιβλίον («The Ktetic involves the idea of possession. It indicates the owner: e.g. the Nilotic horses [= horses of the Nile], Ector’s chiton, the Platonic book»).

¹⁷⁵⁹ Cf. F 503, 3 Radt.

inhabitants of Bosphorus until the sixth century AD.¹⁷⁶⁰ For these reasons, I accepted Daub's correction in my text. Having analyzed the form of Ulpian's title, we must now focus on its contents. According to our testimony, Ulpian wrote the *Patria of Bosphorus*. In order to identify the city, we must move to the Crimean coast of the Black Sea. When the Milesians disembarked on the western side of the Kerch strait, they founded the colony of Bosphorus: in spite of its new designation, the settlement kept being called by the pre-Greek name Panticapaeum (Παντικάπαιον).¹⁷⁶¹ The city became the capital of the Hellenistic Bosporan kingdom. After being conquered by Mithridates VI (107 BC), the reign was freed by the Romans, who transformed it in a client kingdom (63 BC). In the 250s AD, Panticapaeum was sacked by Goths and Heruls.¹⁷⁶² Some years later, between the end of the third century and the beginning of the fourth, Diocletian decided to take control of the kingdom, incorporating it (or just a part of it) into the empire.¹⁷⁶³ Such a decision was probably the result of tensions within the Bosporan state, between the anti-Roman and the pro-Roman forces.¹⁷⁶⁴ The redaction of Ulpian's *patria* could have been influenced by these tensions. Celebrating the mythical origin of Bosphorus was indeed an excellent way to point out the connection of the city with the Hellenized ecumene (and – in a political sense – with the Roman empire). The idea that Panticapaeum was part of the Greco-Roman world could be used, on the local level, against the anti-Roman forces inside the kingdom; on a wider level, against the barbarian pressure from outside. In the fourth century, this pressure increased: as Bury noted, “no cities in the Roman Empire deserve greater credit for preserving Greek civilization in barbarous surroundings than Cherson and Bosphorus in the lonely Cimmerian peninsula” (1931, 310). In this light, the preference of the Greek Βόσπορος over the pre-Greek Παντικάπαιον is meaningful. It is not possible to state what myth was narrated by Ulpian's *patria*. In the sixth century AD, Malalas linked the foundation of Bosphorus to Heracles'

¹⁷⁶⁰ Cf. Proc. *De Bell.* I 12, 8; II 3, 40.

¹⁷⁶¹ For a discussion of the two names of the city, see Brandis 1899, 757.

¹⁷⁶² For a complete presentation of the Bosporan Kingdom, see the study of Gajdukevič 1971.

¹⁷⁶³ Cf. Gajdukevič 1971, 476–477.

¹⁷⁶⁴ Cf. Nadel 1977.

wandering.¹⁷⁶⁵ Something similar could have been narrated by Ulpian.¹⁷⁶⁶

καὶ ἄλλων πλείστων: we cannot identify the other cities addressed in Ulpian's *patria*. The superlative of πολὺς reveals that there were quite a lot. Even if such a reference must need not necessarily be taken at face value, it confirms the popularity of *patria* in Ulpian's age. As a sophist, he must have followed the literary "developments in the market".

προγυμνάσματα, τέχνην ῥητορικὴν: the invention of *progymnasmata* was a typical activity of late antique rhetoricians.¹⁷⁶⁷ The writing of a rhetorical handbook (τέχνη ῥητορικὴ) is also widely attested.¹⁷⁶⁸

Οὐλπιανός, Ἀντιοχεὺς τῆς Συρίας, σοφιστής, παιδεύσας πρότερον εἰς Ἑμεσαν: the edition of Bekker places the entry of Ulpian of Antioch before that of the Emesan namesake; between the two texts, the scholar inserted the entry of Ulpian of Gaza.¹⁷⁶⁹ Such a disposition is hardly defensible. As already said, the reference to the Emesan teaching allows us to identify the Ulpian of this entry with the namesake of the previous one (see above). The use of the adverb πρότερον ("earlier") to indicate the condition preceding that stated by the entry is frequent in the *Suda*.¹⁷⁷⁰ The entry reveals that the sophist was not born in Antioch: the epithet Ἀντιοχεὺς τῆς Συρίας must refer to one of his working places (see above).

ἐν τοῖς κατὰ τὸν βασιλέα Κωνσταντῖνον χρόνοις: the reference to Constantine the Great (emperor from 306 to 337 AD) allows us to place the activity of Ulpian in the first decades of the fourth century AD. The

¹⁷⁶⁵ Cf. Mal. XVIII 14, 1–11 Thurn.

¹⁷⁶⁶ For further information about Heracles' connections with Crimea, see Popova – Kovalenko 1996.

¹⁷⁶⁷ Cf. n. 4, F 1, v. 15.

¹⁷⁶⁸ The *Suda* lists other sixteen works with the same title: cf. α 20; 3918; γ 9; ε 3026; 3363; θ 138; 139; 462; κ 402 (= 469); 1198; μ 1087; 1147; π 809; σ 115; φ 360; 365.

¹⁷⁶⁹ Cf. 1854, *loc. cit.*

¹⁷⁷⁰ E.g. α 1138, 1754, 3008; δ 1154, 1330; ε 277, 768, 937, etc.

dating matches what emerges from the other testimonies (see below). Given its position in the entry, it is not possible to state whether the reference to Constantine involves the whole career of Ulpian, or just his stay in Emesa. The consuetude of the *Suda* supports the latter option.¹⁷⁷¹

λόγους διαφόρους, μελέτας, διαλέξεις· καὶ ἄλλα τινά: the entry is concluded by a hint at “various speeches, exercises, discourses” and – at the very end – by the generic reference to “other things”. Other works have been attributed by scholars to the hand of Ulpian. The first is a text entitled Οὐλπιανοῦ ῥήτορος προλεγόμενα εἰς τοὺς Ὀλυνθιακοὺς καὶ Φιλιππικοὺς Δημοσθένους λόγους (“The Rhetor Ulpian’s Prolegomena to Demosthenes’ Olynthiacs and Philippics”).¹⁷⁷² As Janiszewski noted, this work could easily have been written by our Ulpian.¹⁷⁷³ Less easy to accept is another hypothesis of the scholar, who attributes to the sophist a work on Egyptian history (a hypothetical Αἰγυπτιακά).¹⁷⁷⁴ In order to discuss the hypothesis, we must take two other texts into account. They both come from Stephanus’ *Ethnica*. The former is the entry on the Taenoi (Ταῖηνοί), an Arab tribe: ἔθνος ἀπὸ τῶν Σαρακηνῶν πρὸς μεσημβρίαν, ὡς Οὐλπιανὸς ἐν Ἀραβικοῖς καὶ Οὐράνιος ἐν Ἀραβικῶν δευτέρῳ (“a people living to the south of Saracens, as Ulpian says in the *Arabica* and Uranius in the second book of the *Arabica*”).¹⁷⁷⁵ Stephanus mentions a work on Arabia written by an Ulpian. Jacoby identified this author as our sophist and inserted the fragment in his edition.¹⁷⁷⁶ But the text raises two problems: one, nothing guarantees that the Ulpian of Stephanus is the same sophist named by the *Suda* and the other testimonies; and two, the form of the name is not completely clear. Let us start from the latter point. The reading of the manuscripts reporting the passage is not homogeneous: whereas the codices *Aldinus* and

¹⁷⁷¹ See, for instance, α 843, 2185, 3835, 4739; ε 789, 3737, etc. When the *Suda* uses emperors for a general dating of its subjects, it does not add any verb, but make the chronological reference immediately follow the general presentation: e.g. γ 481.

¹⁷⁷² Critical edition in Dilts 1983, 14–235; 1986, 1–384. See also the introduction in 1983, 1–13.

¹⁷⁷³ Cf. 2006, 244.

¹⁷⁷⁴ Cf. 2006, 245–246.

¹⁷⁷⁵ Cf. *Ethn.* s.v. Ταῖηνοί (τ 6 Billerbeck).

¹⁷⁷⁶ Cf. *FGrHist* 676 F1. The fragment has been included also in *BNJ* 676: cf. F1.

Palatinus have Ούλπιανός, the *Vossianus* has Ούπιανός and the *Rhedigeranus* Ούλυμπιανός.¹⁷⁷⁷ The third form is echoed by another entry of the *Ethnica*: Δούλων πόλις [...]. ἔστι καὶ χωρίον ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ Δουλόπολις, ὡς φησιν Ὀλυμπιανός (“Doulopolis [...]. There is also a place in Egypt named Doulopolis, as Olympianus says”).¹⁷⁷⁸ Noting the similarities between the Ὀλυμπιανός of this passage and the Ούλυμπιανός of the preceding one, Jacoby inserted the text into Ulpian’s corpus: he considered it a doubtful fragment.¹⁷⁷⁹ Before him, Meineke too had thought that the two entries referred to the same author: for this reason, editing the text on the Taenoi, he had chosen the reading Ὀλυμπιανός.¹⁷⁸⁰ The choice is disputable on two grounds. First, the two forms of the hypothetical name Olympianus do not coincide. The reading Ούλυμπιανός could easily have originated from both Ὀλυμπιανός and Ούλπιανός; in the former case, the copyist just had to add an upsilon; in the latter, he must only remove it. If the two possibilities were on the same level, we would not be in a condition to choose one of them. There is, however, a second element to take into account: in the entry on the Taenoi, the majority of manuscripts have the form Ούλπιανός. For this reason, I would consider it the best variant. If we refer the Arabian work to an Ulpian, we cannot attribute the notice on Doulopolis to the same writer: it must belong to another author.¹⁷⁸¹ Having defined the name of the author of Ἀραβικά, shall we identify him with the sophist of Emesa? The attribution is possible: yet, there is a better candidate. The Arabian tribe of the *Ṭayy* (the Ταῖηνοί of Stephanus) became important to Roman eyes in the second half of the fourth century AD: in the same years, Ulpian of Samosata was *dux et praeses Arabiae*.¹⁷⁸² Before starting a political career, this Ulpian was a rhetor: he could easily be the author of the Arabian history.¹⁷⁸³ To

¹⁷⁷⁷ Cf. Meineke 1849, 598. Billerbeck (2016, 248) did not report the second variant, considering it a miswriting of the first one.

¹⁷⁷⁸ *Ethn.* s.v. Δούλων πόλις (δ 117 Billerbeck).

¹⁷⁷⁹ Cf. *FGrHist* 676, F3 (= *BNJ* 676, F3).

¹⁷⁸⁰ Cf. 1849, 598.

¹⁷⁸¹ The text on Doulopolis does not present any variant of Olympianus’ name. See Graf (= *BNJ* 676, F2).

¹⁷⁸² Cf. *PLRE* I, 973–974 (‘Ulpianus 3’). See also Hall 2007, 441.

¹⁷⁸³ The hypothesis has been made by Graf, who has provided also an excellent introduction to the *Ṭayy* and their relations with Rome: cf. *BNJ* 676, F1.

conclude, we can state two points at least: first, the source of Stephanus' entries is not the same; second, the work on Arabia could have been written by someone different from our Ulpian. This discussion allows us to return to Janiszski's idea: he hypothesized a work of Ulpian concerning Egyptian history because of the fragment on Doulopolis; since the text has been attributed to someone else, we can also eliminate the hypothetical Αίγυπτιακά.¹⁷⁸⁴ As I already said, there is no need to attribute to Ulpian a local history of Antioch: the reference to the origin of the Syrian city could have been placed in another work (cf. **T1**).

T 3

Source date: 363 AD.

Δημητρίω: Libanius writes to his close friends Demetrius, a leading citizen of Tarsus.¹⁷⁸⁵ He wants to recommend the retired advocate Macedonius, who has been appointed by the Syrian governor Alexander as *defensor* of Demetrius' city.¹⁷⁸⁶

Ούλπιανου μὲν οὗτος ἐταῖρος: at the beginning of his letter, Libanius immediately explains who the person carrying the message is.¹⁷⁸⁷ Given the scope of the text, such an incipit is not surprising: Demetrius must know who he is asked to recommend and why. In order to introduce Macedonius, Libanius places him in the network of his acquaintances.¹⁷⁸⁸ He defines him Ούλπιανου [...] ἐταῖρος ("pupil of Ulpian"). Such a use of ἐταῖρος is not infrequent in Greek literature: it is already attested in Xenophon, who uses it to indicate Socrates'

¹⁷⁸⁴ Another reason for that is the geographical position of Doulopolis: Stephanus places it in Libya, not in Egypt. For further information, see Graf's commentary to *BNJ* 676, F3.

¹⁷⁸⁵ Cf. *PLRE* I, 247–248 (s.v. 'Demetrius 2'). For an introduction to Libanius' letters, see Cabouret – Van Hoof 2014.

¹⁷⁸⁶ Cf. *PLRE* I, 526 (s.v. 'Macedonius 2'). See also *PLRE* I, 40–41 ('Alexander 5').

¹⁷⁸⁷ The pronoun οὗτος confirms that Macedonius himself was supposed to deliver the letter to Demetrius: cf. Bradbury 2004, 186.

¹⁷⁸⁸ About Libanius' wide social network(s), see Bradbury 2014.

disciples.¹⁷⁸⁹ Given the dating of the letter and the Antiochean context of its author, the identification of this Ulpian as the author of *patria* is highly plausible. If Macedonius had retired from his profession in 363, his training must have taken place in the first decades of the fourth century: in the same years, Ulpian was leading his school in Antioch. If we accept the identification, we must hypothesize that Libanius knew the sophist.¹⁷⁹⁰ Such a note allows us to introduce the hypothesis of Schemmel. In his *Oration XXXVI*, Libanius recalls one of his teachers, calling him ὁ Ἀσκαλωνίτης (“the citizen of Ascalona”).¹⁷⁹¹ While the former editor of the oration Förster had identified this unnamed person as the sophist Aedesius,¹⁷⁹² Schemmel considered Ulpian a better candidate. As already said, he remarked that the two epithets provided by the *Suda* do not necessarily indicate Ulpian’s birthplace, but can simply refer to the places where he worked.¹⁷⁹³ Although this remark is basically correct (cf. **T2**), the identification of Ulpian as the Ascalonian teacher cannot be proved. As Janiszewski rightly pointed out, “in the source material no one is attested as Οὐλιπιανὸς Ἀσκαλωνίτης” (2006, 243).

πατήρ δὲ ἡμετέρων ἐταίρων: Macedonius’ sons have not been identified. The only thing we know is that they studied under the guidance of Libanius.

δείξας δὲ ἐν δικαστηρίοις ῥώμην τῷ νόμῳ πέπαυται νῦν: Libanius informs Demetrius that Macedonius has retired from his activity. After this note, he evokes the order of the Syrian governor to use retired advocates in defense of the cities and the decision of Macedonius to come to Tarsus: τοῦ δὲ ἄρχοντος οἰηθέντος δεῖν ὑπὲρ τῶν πόλεων τοῖς

¹⁷⁸⁹ E.g. Xen. *Mem.* 2, 8, 1. Cf. Arist. *Pol.* 1274a 28; *Met.* 985b 4; Plut. *Mor.* 67D 13; 580D 5; 589E 2; etc.

¹⁷⁹⁰ Yet, we cannot identify with our Ulpian the namesake addressed by Libanius’ letters (cf. *Ep.* 670; 1127; 1155; 1159; 1206; 1219; 1236; 1273; 1276; 1281; 1285; 1289; 1302): he is Ulpian of Samosata (see the Introduction). The Ulpian of other two letters is Libanius’ pupil: cf. *Ep.* 648; 1353; see *PLRE* I, 973 (‘Ulpianus 2’).

¹⁷⁹¹ Cf. *Or.* XXXVI 10, 3.

¹⁷⁹² Cf. 1906, 230. About Aedesius of Antioch, see *PLRE* I, 14 (‘Aedesius 1’).

¹⁷⁹³ Cf. Schemmel 1917, *loc. cit.*

σεσιγηκόσι χρήσασθαι πεμπόμενος ἄλλοσε προῦκρινε τὴν ὑμετέραν (“when the governor decided that he ought to employ retired advocates in defence of the cities, even though this fellow was summoned elsewhere, he preferred your city”).¹⁷⁹⁴ The letter is concluded by an optimistic projection about the future relation between Demetrius and Macedonius.

T 4

Source date: tenth century AD.

Προαιρέσιος, Παγκρατίου, Καππαδόκης ἀπὸ Καισαρείας, σοφιστής: the sophist Prohaeresius is surely the most important pupil of Ulpian.¹⁷⁹⁵ Among his students, we can list Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzus,¹⁷⁹⁶ and even the emperor Julian (who later removed him from office).¹⁷⁹⁷ Eunapius studied with the sophist too, and dedicated one of his biographies to him: the work represents a precious source of information, both about the sophist and the culture of his age.¹⁷⁹⁸ The entry of the *Suda* begins by providing three important elements: the name of Prohaeresius’ father, his country, and his profession. It is possible that the Pancratius of our entry corresponds to the namesake who wrote a commentary on Minucianus’ *Τέχνη*: in that case, Prohaeresius would have followed in the professional footsteps of his father.¹⁷⁹⁹ There is not enough data to reach safe conclusions. As the *Suda* witnesses, Prohaeresius was born in Caesarea of Cappadocia: the testimony of the encyclopedia seems to conflict with that of Eunapius, who says that Prohaeresius was of Armenian origin (cf. **F5**). Three suppositions can be made to reconcile the two versions: one could

¹⁷⁹⁴ Translation of Bradbury 2004, 186.

¹⁷⁹⁵ For an introduction to the sophist and a discussion of his activity, see Goulet 2000; Penella 2006, 83–94; Watts 2006, 48–78; Di Branco 2011.

¹⁷⁹⁶ Cf. *Socr.* IV 26, 6; *Soz.* VI 17, 1.

¹⁷⁹⁷ Cf. *Jul. Ep.* 31; *Lib. Ep.* 275. About Prohaeresius’ removal, see *Jer. Chron.* a. 362; *Eun. VS* X 8, 1; *Oros.* VII 30, 3.

¹⁷⁹⁸ Cf. *VS* X.

¹⁷⁹⁹ Cf. *Sud.* π 12; *PLRE I*, 664 (‘Pancratius 2’). Further information about the rhetorician Minucianus in Weißenberger 2000.

hypothesize that the sophist was born in Caesarea from a family of Armenian blood;¹⁸⁰⁰ otherwise, that he spent some years in Cappadocia before his stay in Antioch;¹⁸⁰¹ finally, one could also consider that one of the two sources is wrong. If we take Prohaeresius as a Cappadocian with Armenian ancestors, or as an Armenian student moving to Antioch and taking a break in Caesarea, we must consider Eunapius' account inaccurate (at least!). The biographer explicitly writes that his teacher moved from Armenia (= he must have been there)¹⁸⁰² to Antioch, without any intermediate step (see below). Two questions arise. First, how long should Prohaeresius' stay in Caesarea have been, to make the *Suda* present him as a Cappadocian? Could a simple break in the voyage towards Antioch be so important as to characterize the sophist? Second, should we prefer the testimony of a tenth-century encyclopedia to that of a pupil of Prohaeresius himself? It is true that Eunapius has the tendency to present his former teacher in the best light possible, sometimes adulterating his stories to create sympathy (see, for instance, the reference to Prohaeresius' poverty: see below). Yet, I can hardly see what advantage he would have obtained from a reference to Armenia. As these considerations show, the testimony of the *Suda* is likely incorrect. The encyclopedia (or its source) must have confused Prohaeresius with someone else. Interestingly, the sophist's master Julian came from Caesarea of Cappadocia (cf. **T1**): his origin could be the cause of the mistake.¹⁸⁰³

μαθητεύσας ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ παρὰ Οὐλπιανῷ: according to Eunapius, Prohaeresius started his studies in Antioch and not in Athens because he was ashamed of his low economic status (cf. **F5**). Rather than shame, I would see logistic reasons behind his choice: a moving to Antioch was less demanding for his meager finances than a transfer to Athens. It must be noted, though, that the resources of Prohaeresius' family must

¹⁸⁰⁰ So Ensslin 1957 and *PLRE* I, 731 ('Proaeresius').

¹⁸⁰¹ Cf. Penella 1990, 83–84.

¹⁸⁰² One could also suppose that Prohaeresius was born in Cappadocia, moved to Armenia, and came to Antioch: but such a dynamic is hardly believable.

¹⁸⁰³ Along with this aspect, Penella (2006, 83) mentioned Gregory of Nazianzus and Basil's connection with Armenia as a proof of the Armenian origin of their master.

have been less scant than Eunapius says: they allowed the ambitious guyman to study with Ulpian, the best teacher he could find in Antioch (see below).

γέγονε δὲ πρὸ Λιβανίου κατὰ τὰς Ἀθήνας σοφιστεύων: Libanius was in Athens between 336 and 340 AD.¹⁸⁰⁴ Before these years, Prohaeresius reached the city to study rhetoric under the guidance of Julian of Caesarea (cf. **T1**). At the death of his teacher, he took his place.¹⁸⁰⁵ I already listed the most illustrious pupils he had (see above): along with them, he hosted students from the whole Roman orient.¹⁸⁰⁶ Expelled from Athens because of the jealousy of his colleagues, he was soon called back.¹⁸⁰⁷ He remained in the Attic city until his death in 366/7.¹⁸⁰⁸

καὶ τιμῶν ἔτυχε τῶν μεγίστων τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος Κωνσταντίνου: the *Suda* says that Prohaeresius obtained the highest honors from the emperor Constantine. The comparison of this report with the information provided by Eunapius is particularly interesting. The biographer writes that Prohaeresius was invited to Gaul and highly honored by the emperor Constans.¹⁸⁰⁹ The emperor himself nominated the sophist Pretorian Prefect.¹⁸¹⁰ Could the text of the *Suda* be the result of a confusion between Constantine and his youngest son? In order to analyze the idea, we must make reference to another entry of the encyclopedia, that of Eustochius of Cappadocia: Εὐστόχιος, Καππαδόκης, σοφιστής. ἔγραψε τὰ κατὰ Κώνσταντα τὸν βασιλέα καὶ ἀρχαιολογίαν Καππαδοκίας καὶ λοιπῶν ἐθνῶν ("Eustochius, of Cappadocia, sophist. He wrote *The History of Emperor Constans*, an *Archeology of Cappadocia* and of other peoples").¹⁸¹¹ The passage

¹⁸⁰⁴ Cf. Lib. *Or.* I 15–26; Eun. *VS* XVI 1, 2–3; *Sud.* λ 486.

¹⁸⁰⁵ Cf. Eun. *VS* X 3, 9.

¹⁸⁰⁶ Cf. Eun. *VS* X 3, 12.

¹⁸⁰⁷ Cf. Eun. *VS* X 3, 15–4, 1.

¹⁸⁰⁸ Cf. Eun. *VS* X 8, 3–4.

¹⁸⁰⁹ Cf. *VS* X 7, 1–2. Such a warm reception took place again in Rome, where a statue of Prohaeresius was erected: cf. Eun. *VS* X 7, 3–4.

¹⁸¹⁰ Cf. *VS* X 7, 5.

¹⁸¹¹ *Sud.* ε 3755 (= *FGrHist* 738 T1 = *BNJ* 738 T1). Cf. *PLRE* I, 313 ('Eustochius 2'); Janiszewski 2006, 298–304; 380–382.

presents another sophist of the fourth century AD: as usual, it introduces his name, provenance, profession, and works.¹⁸¹² Among these last, the entry names a *History of the Emperor Constans* (τὰ κατὰ Κώνσταντα τὸν βασιλέα): one of the manuscripts of the *Suda* – the codex *Laurentianus* 55, 1 (= F in Adler’s edition) – has Κωνσταντῖνον instead of Κώνσταντα.¹⁸¹³ Janiszewski did not exclude the possibility that the variant Κωνσταντῖνον could be the right one.¹⁸¹⁴ I would rather say that the passage from Κώνσταντα to Κωνσταντῖνον is easier to explain than the opposite one. That a copyist could have transformed Constantine the Great into his obscurer son is quite hard to believe. On the contrary, it is not difficult to understand why the same copyist could have changed the controversial Constans into his father. Nothing prevents the same process having taken place in Prohaeresius’ entry: a copyist could have corrected an original τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος Κώσταντος in the present τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος Κωνσταντίνου. Since, however, no manuscript reports the variant, the hypothetical change cannot be proven.¹⁸¹⁵

T 5

Source date: fourth century AD.

νέον δὲ αὐτὸν ἐξ Ἀρμενίας ἀναστήσαντος τοῦ δαίμονος καὶ πρὸς τὴν Ἀντιόχειαν διαβαλόντος: as already said, the testimony of Eunapius reveals the Armenian origin of Prohaeresius (cf. **T4**). It confirms that Armenian students used to frequent Greek teachers already by the fourth century AD. This cultural trend gave a fundamental contribution to the creation of a distinctive Armenian

¹⁸¹² It is possible that this Eustochius is the addressee of some letters of Gregory of Nazianzus (cf. *Ep.* 189–191; *PLRE* I 313 [‘Eustochius 5’]; McLynn 2006): if so, he must have studied with the Cappadocian father in Athens. Could he be another pupil of Prohaeresius?

¹⁸¹³ Cf. Adler 1931, 473.

¹⁸¹⁴ Cf. 2006, 380–382.

¹⁸¹⁵ One could also hypothesize that the author of the *Suda* mistakenly mentioned Constantine. Otherwise, that the first Christian emperor effectively honored Prohaeresius before his son.

cursus studiorum: the Greek texts studied in centers such as Antioch and Athens were brought back to Armenia and translated.¹⁸¹⁶ As Calzolari pointed out, this process is echoed by some Armenian traditions, which link the two founders of Armenian culture – David the Invincible and Moses of Khoren¹⁸¹⁷ – to the Athenian school: curiously enough, they were considered schoolmates of Gregory of Nazianzus and Basil.¹⁸¹⁸ Were it not for the obvious chronological problems (the two characters lived respectively in the sixth and in the fifth centuries AD), they could have been students of Prohaeresius! The eastern origin of the sophist likely explains the fact – reported by Eunapius – that the majority of his students came from the eastern regions of the empire.¹⁸¹⁹ When describing the move to Antioch, the biographer attribute the decision to a δαίμων. The substantive indicates the divine power determining the fate of people.¹⁸²⁰ It has a strong philosophical background: the famous daemon of Socrates exemplifies that.¹⁸²¹ The idea of a destiny guiding Prohaeresius’ sophistic life pervades the whole biography of Eunapius.¹⁸²² The idea was widespread in imperial culture: Libanius too attributed the success of his career to divine fortune.¹⁸²³

(οὐ γὰρ ἐπεθύμησεν εὐθὺς τῶν Ἀθηνῶν, ἢ τε ἔνδεια παρελύπει τῶν χρημάτων· γεγονὼς γὰρ ἄνωθεν καλῶς, τοῦτο ἡτύχει): as already stated, the poverty of Prohaeresius’ family must not be considered too tragic. The future sophist was not able to arrive directly in Athens, the main imperial center of rhetorical studies: yet, he could go to Antioch to study with the best teacher in town (see below). As Penella rightly observed, Eunapius “makes use of the fact of Prohaeresius’

¹⁸¹⁶ For a panoramic on the topic, see Calzolari 2016.

¹⁸¹⁷ About David, see Calzolari–Barnes 2009; about Moses, see Garsoïan 2003–2004, Thomson 2006.

¹⁸¹⁸ Cf. Calzolari 2016, 50.

¹⁸¹⁹ Cf. Eun. VS X 3, 12.

¹⁸²⁰ For the meaning of δαίμων, see LSJ, 365–366.

¹⁸²¹ Cf. Plat. *Apol.* 31c–d, 40a. For a discussion, see the imperial analysis of Plut. *Mor.* 575B–598F (*De Genio Socratis*) and the modern studies of Destrée 2005, Joyal 2005.

¹⁸²² Cf. VS X 2, 3; 3, 17; 4, 10; 5, 8.

¹⁸²³ Cf. *Or.* I 1.

relative poverty to elicit sympathy and admiration for his biographical subject” (2006, 84).

καὶ πρὸς τὸν Οὐλπιανὸν κρατοῦντα τῆς Ἀντιοχείας ἐπὶ λόγοις ὥσθεις, καὶ παρελθὼν, εὐθὺς ἀνὰ τοὺς πρῶτους ἦν: Eunapius says that Ulpian “excelled in Antioch for his rhetorical abilities”. His school must have been the most prestigious of the city. In these circumstances, that the wealthy Libanius could have studied with him is not implausible: yet, as already said in the commentary to **T3**, it is not possible to prove it. Eunapius notes that Prohaeresius immediately became the best student of Ulpian: the same *canovaccio* takes place in Athens, some years later, where the Armenian became the most capable pupil of Julian.¹⁸²⁴

T 6

Source date: tenth century AD.

Ἐπιφάνιος, Οὐλπιανοῦ, Πετραῖος, σοφιστής: along with the *Suda*, other sources mention Ulpian’s son Epiphanius. Precious information is reported by Eunapius, who gives a brief presentation of his career (see below). Other elements are provided by Socrates Scholasticus and Sozomen, who inform us that he was a pagan and also taught in Laodicea.¹⁸²⁵ The *Suda* defines Epiphanius Πετραῖος, as “of Petra”. As already seen in the entries on Ulpian (see above), the adjective does not necessarily mean that the sophist was born in Arabia. The entry of the encyclopedia also notes that he worked in the same city (see below): the title Πετραῖος could have originated thus. In this situation, Penella’s hypothesis that the Sudaist confused Epiphanius with another Ἀράβιος (maybe Eusebius of Petra: cf. **F7**) is not necessary.¹⁸²⁶ If we wanted to consider Πετραῖος as a reference to Epiphanius’ birth place, we should

¹⁸²⁴ Cf. *VS IX* 1, 4.

¹⁸²⁵ Cf. *Soc.* II 46; *Soz.* VI 25, 9–10. See also *Sud.* α 3398.

¹⁸²⁶ Cf. 1990, 95–96. Discussing Penella’s suggestion, Graf noted that Callinicus of Petra (*FGrHist* 281: see the general Introduction) is defined by sources both Syrian and Arabian (cf. *BNJ* 676, *Bibliographical Essay*). It confirms that this kind of epithets could be used in antiquity to indicate different aspects.

hypothesize a stay of Ulpian in the Arabian province in the first quarter of the fourth century (see below): since, however, such a stay is not attested in other sources, I would prefer to take the adjective as an allusion to Epiphanius' chair.¹⁸²⁷ The sophistic profession of Ulpian's son is witnessed by the works he wrote. Sozomen mentions a hymn to Bacchus,¹⁸²⁸ but the majority of titles is provided by our entry: it lists a book *On Similarity and Difference of the Issues* (Περὶ κοινωνίας καὶ διαφορᾶς τῶν στάσεων), rhetorical exercises and declamations (προγυμνάσματα, μελέτας), two works entitled *Demarchs* (Δημάρχους) and *On the Archons* (Πολεμαρχικόν), epideictic speeches (λόγους ἐπιδεικτικούς) and some assorted investigations (τινα σύμμικτα θεωρήματα).

παιδεύσας ἔν τε αὐτῇ καὶ ἐν Ἀθήναις: the *Suda* reports that Epiphanius taught in Petra and in Athens. His residence in the former city could justify the problematic Πετραῖος of our entry (see above). For the Athenian stay, further elements are transmitted by Eunapius. He informs us that Epiphanius was one of the successors of Julian of Cappadocia,¹⁸²⁹ adding that all his disciples came from the eastern provinces of the empire.¹⁸³⁰ The biographer says also that the sophist had died childless and not yet old before his arrival in Athens in 362: this note places Epiphanius' birth in the first quarter of the fourth century.¹⁸³¹

T 7

Source date: tenth century AD.

¹⁸²⁷ A link to the Ulpian who was *dux et praeses Arabiae* is not possible. He governed the province between 363 and 364: how could the Arabian Epiphanius be his son, if he died one year before?

¹⁸²⁸ Cf. Soz. *loc. cit.*

¹⁸²⁹ Cf. VS X 3, 9.

¹⁸³⁰ Cf. VS X 3, 12. The oriental origin of Epiphanius could explain such a tendency: we have noted the same for the Armenian Prohaeresius (cf. T5).

¹⁸³¹ Cf. VS XI 2.

Εὐσέβιος, Ἀράβιος, σοφιστῆς ἀντισοφιστεύσας καὶ αὐτὸς Οὐλπιανῶ: according to Penella, the entry on Eusebius could have been the reason for the Πετραῖος of **F6**; as already said, such a hypothesis is not necessary to explain the adjective (see above). No other source mentions the Arabian Eusebius: even our entry gives little information. Since he is presented as a sophist, he must have flourished in the imperial age: his name suggests a late dating. He was the rival of an undetermined Ulpian, whose link to the sophist of Antioch is possible, but not sure. That said, I would think that the author of the *patria* remains the best candidate for the identification.¹⁸³²

¹⁸³² Ulpian of Samosata was not a sophist, but a rhetor: cf. Lib. *Ep.* 689.

Curriculum Vitae

Trained as a classical philologist at the University of Bologna, where he obtained a M.A. in Classics (*cum laude*), Lorenzo Focanti is currently Ph.D. student in Late Antique Historiography at Ghent University and the University of Groningen. He has taken part in the FWO – NWO project ‘Finding the Present in the Distant Past: The cultural meaning of antiquarianism in late antiquity’ (2013–2017). Under the guidance of Prof. Dr. Peter Van Nuffelen and Dr. Jan Willem Drijvers, he has studied the evolution of Greek local historiography between the third and the sixth centuries AD: the results of his research are the base of this dissertation. He also collaborated with the ERC project ‘Memory of empire. The post-imperial historiography of late antiquity’ (2013–2017), contributing to the creation of the *Clavis Historicorum Tardae Antiquitatis* (CHTA). During his Ph.D., Lorenzo Focanti presented his research at several international conferences, publishing articles and reviews. In 2015, he spent a semester at the LMU Munich, working under the guidance of Prof. Dr. Therese Fuhrer.

Academic Summary

The aim of this dissertation is to study a late antique literary phenomenon, i.e. the writing of *patria*. Byzantine sources such as Stephanus of Byzantium and the *Suda* apply this denomination to works narrating the mythical origin of Greek cities. These texts seasoned their narration with antiquarian elements (such as the reference to particular cults or the description of ancient sanctuaries). They were usually written in verse and had strong connections with the Hellenistic κτίσεις and the imperial local histories. The first part of the dissertation provides a general introduction to this literary production. It is divided in five sections. They concern: **a.** the linguistic analysis of the Greek plural neuter πάτρια, with a particular focus on its occurrences in ancient literature; **b.** the features and contents of late antique *patria*, as they emerge from the testimonies at disposal; **c.** the influence of the political, social, and economic evolution of the eastern empire on the production of *patria*; **d.** the so-called *Patria of Constantinople* (Πάτρια Κωνσταντινουπόλεως) and the Byzantine patriographic literature; **e.** the structure and the principles of the following edition (see below), with a particular focus on the choice of the material and its disposition. The second part presents a new critical edition of the fragmentary *patria*. The authors are listed in alphabetical order: the absence of references for some of them makes a chronological disposition impossible. The first πάτρια are anonymous. They are: **1.** the *Patria of Alexandria* quoted by John Malalas; **2.** the *Patria of Byzantium* cited by Stephanus of Byzantium; **3.** the *Patria of Antinoupolis* reported by *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352; **4.** the *Patria of Hermopolis* preserved by *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481. Along with these anonymous texts, the edition includes the *patria* with an acknowledged author: **5.** the *Patria of Anazarbus* of Asclepius; **6.** the *Patria of Constantinople, Thessalonica, Nacle, Miletus, Tralles, and Aphrodisias*, written by the Egyptian poet Christodorus; **7.** Claudianus' *Patria of Tarsus, Anazarbus, Berytus, and Nicaea*; **8.** the *Patria of Cyzicus* of Diogenes; **9.** the *Patria of Hermopolis* of Hermias; **10.** the *Patria of Alexandria* of the grammarian Horapollon; **11.** the *Patria of Oasis* of the third-century poet Soterichus; **12.** the *Patria of Emesa, Heliopolis, and Bosporus* of Ulpian. For every author, the edition provides an

introduction, the text and the translation of testimonies and fragments, and an extensive linguistic, literary, and historical commentary.

Het doel van dit proefschrift is een studie van een laat antiek literair fenomeen, namelijk het schrijven van *patria*. Byzantijnse bronnen zoals Stephanus van Byzantium en de *Suda* passen deze benoeming toe op werken die de mythische oorsprong van Griekse steden verhalen. Deze teksten peperden hun verhaal met antiquaire elementen (zoals verwijzingen naar specifieke culten of de beschrijving van antieke heiligdommen). Ze werden meestal in rijmschema geschreven en hadden sterke banden met de Hellenistische κτίσεις en de keizerlijke lokale geschiedenissen. Het eerste deel van het proefschrift verschaft een algemene inleiding tot deze literaire productie. Het is verdeeld in vijf secties. Ze betreffen: **a.** De linguïstische analyse van het Griekse onzijdig meervoudig πάτρια, met een specifieke focus op haar verschijnen in antieke literatuur; **b.** de kenmerken en inhoud van laat antieke *patria*, zoals ze verschijnen in de beschikbare getuigenissen; **c.** de invloed van de politieke, sociale, en economische evolutie van het oostelijk rijksoord op de productie van *patria*; **d.** de zogenaamde *Patria van Constantinopel* (Πάτρια Κωνσταντινουπόλεως) en de Byzantijnse patriografische literatuur; **e.** de structuur en de principes van de volgende editie (zie onderaan), met een specifieke focus op het gebruik van het materiaal en haar inrichting. Het tweede deel presenteert een nieuwe kritische editie van de fragmentaire *patria*. De auteurs zijn opgesteld in alfabetische volgorde: het ontbreken van verwijzingen voor sommigen onder hen maakt een chronologische opstelling onmogelijk. De eerste πάτρια zijn anoniem. Deze zijn: **1.** de *Patria van Alexandrië* geciteerd door Johannes Malalas; **2.** de *Patria van Byzantium* geciteerd door Stephanus van Byzantium; **3.** de *Patria van Antinoupolis* bericht in *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4352; **4.** de *Patria van Hermopolis* bewaard in *P. Stras. Gr. Inv.* 481. Samen met deze anonieme teksten, voegt de editie de *patria* met een erkende auteur toe; **5.** de *Patria van Anazarbus* van Asclepius; **6.** de *Patria van Constantinopel, Thessalonica, Nacle, Milete, Tralles en Aphrodisias*, geschreven door de Egyptische dichter Christodorus; **7.** Claudianus' *Patria van Tarsus, Anazarbus, Berytus, en Nicaea*; **8.** de *Patria van Cyzicus* van Diogenes; **9.** de *Patria van Hermopolis* van Hermias; **10.** de *Patria van Alexandria* van de grammaticus Horapollon;

11. de *Patria van Oasis* van de derde-eeuwse dichter Soterichus; **12.** de *Patria van Emesa, Heliopolis, en Bosporus* van Ulpianus. Voor elke auteur, voorziet de editie een inleiding, de tekst en de vertaling van de getuigenissen en fragmenten, en een exhaustieve taalkundige, literaire en historische commentaar.